ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY

CARDINAL GASQUET

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND

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BY

ABBOT GASQUET

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A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND

PART I

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST

I

THE BRITISH CHURCH

When our Saviour sent forth His Apostles to preach the Gospel Britain had already come under the power of the Roman Emperors. In the designs of God's providence this vast empire was destined to aid in spreading far and wide the Christian faith. And so it came to pass that this distant island and Jerusalem, where by Christ's death on the cross the redemption of the world was accomplished, then formed parts of a worldwide organised system of government whose centre was at Rome.

The inhabitants of the land, who were called Britons, seem to have possessed a not inconsiderable measure of civilisation, and their subjugation by the Romans was only effected after a long and stubborn resistance. Indeed, it was not until the beginning of the second century of the Christian Era that the Roman system of colonisation can be said to have had its full effect in this distant province, and

the native inhabitants settled down under the government of their masters. After that cities, villas, temples, camps, theatres and baths gradually sprung up all over the country, and for three hundred years Roman officials administered justice and Roman legions preserved order in the land.

It was during this time that the Christian faith was implanted in the country. How it came, or whence, or exactly when, must for ever remain a matter of conjecture and uncertainty. But that the blessings of the Gospel teaching, which effected so great a change in the hearts and lives of the British race, must have come to them some time in the second or third century seems almost beyond question. Legends, containing doubtless some measure of truth—some foundation of fact—which it is now impossible to distinguish from the poetic elements which enshroud it, have been made from the earliest times to do duty for more exact history and have fed the piety of our Catholic ancestors. It is easy to understand how, for example, they loved to imagine that their country had received the light of truth, if not actually from one of the Apostles, at least from some one of their immediate followers. Thus the story of Saint Joseph of Arimathea's mission and of his connection with the great monastery of Glastonbury was long credited by the simple faith of those who loved to link their land with the memory of those who had personally known our Lord Himself.

More likely indeed, but yet not devoid of many elements of uncertainty and doubt, is the story, told by Saint Bede, of how Lucius, king of Britain, sent to Pope Eleutherius in the year A.D. 157 "praying to be made a Christian by an act of his authority"; and how, upon his petition being granted, his messengers were instructed in the faith and baptised. One of them, Elfan, it is said, was consecrated a bishop, and another, Medwy, a doctor, or teacher. The ancient devotion of the Welsh to this King Lucius and to his messengers, as well as to the two Italian missioners Damianus and Fugatius, who are said to have been sent by the Pope at this time into England, would seem to testify in some measure to some substantial truth in this legend. Even if it were wholly true, however, it would not, of course, follow that Christianity did not come to this country through other channels. If probability is to be any guide in this matter, no way would appear to be more likely than that the Faith was brought

from Rome by the Roman soldiers, or by the British youths, numbers of whom served in the Imperial armies abroad.

Whatever may have been the way, however, and whenever the exact time, this much seems certain, that the Gospel had been successfully preached to the Britons in Britain, and that the fact was known to Tertullian, at the beginning of the third century. In A.D. 208, in which year he wrote his tract *Against the Jews*, he expressly declares that the "haunts of the British, which have been inaccessible to the Romans, are subject to Christ."

More than a century passes without further information as to British Christianity. When the light comes again, however, it is to find, in A.D. 314, evidence of an organised Church sending three of its bishops to take part in the Council of Arles, presided over by legates of Pope St. Sylvester. These British bishops assented to Canon I. of this Council, by which Easter was to be kept on the day appointed by the Pope. They joined also in the epistle dispatched by the assembled Fathers to the Pope asking him to send round "the customary letters" announcing the results of their deliberations. They address him as "most beloved Pope Sylvester," and say that, "abiding in the common link of charity and in the bond of the unity of their Mother the Catholic Church," they "salute him, the glorious Pope, with deserved reverence." They express their regret that he was not with them, but realise that he could not absent himself from "those parts in which also the Apostles daily sit, and their blood without ceasing attests the glory of God."

From this time onward almost everything that we know about the British Church manifests it as one with the Catholic Church throughout the world. In A.D. 325 British bishops attended the Council of Nicæa; and the Emperor Constantine in his letter to bishops who had not been present names Britain with Rome as one among the Catholic Churches which agreed in the date of Easter. Two-and-twenty years later, according to the testimony of St. Hilary, bishops from Britain assented to the decrees of the Council of Sardica (A.D. 347) which acquitted St. Athanasius. At this time obviously the Church in Britain was one in faith with St. Athanasius, and could not have been tainted with Arianism, as St. Bede, misled by Gildas, suggests. It was at this Council of Sardica, moreover, that a provision was made about appealing to the Pope, and in the Synodical

letter the Fathers say: "It would seem to be the best and most proper course for the priests of the Lord from every province to refer to their head, that is, to the See of the Apostle Peter."

In A.D. 358 St. Hilary of Poictiers wrote his book *De Synodis*. In it he expressly names the "bishops of the British provinces" as amongst those who have remained "undefiled and uninjured by all contagion of the detestable (Arian) heresy." He addresses them as "bishops communicating with me in Christ," and rejoices "in the integrity of their common faith."

In the following year (A.D. 359) British bishops attended the Council of Rimini, and their expenses were paid by the Emperor. A few years later, again, St. Athanasius, writing in conjunction with the other bishops from the Council of Alexandria (A.D. 363), in a letter addressed to the Emperor Jovian, names Britain as among those Churches consenting to the faith of Nicæa.

The beginning of the fifth century saw the rise of the Pelagian heresy. Pelagius, the originator of the errors, was himself a member of the British Church, and, when excommunicated for his false teaching, wrote in A.D. 402 to Pope Innocent I. as follows: "This, most blessed Pope, is the faith we have learnt in the Catholic Church. . . . If anything is stated therein not accurately or guardedly, as it should be, we desire to be corrected by you, who hold both Peter's faith and See. But if this our confession is approved by the judgment of your Apostleship, then whosoever endeavours to cast blots on me will prove himself either ignorant or malicious, or even not a Catholic, but will not prove that I am a heretic."

The errors of Pelagius appear to have found some, if not many, adherents in Britain, and grave religious dissensions of a serious character sprang up in the Church of this country. St. Victricius, Bishop of Rouen, and himself a Briton by birth, was charged in A.D. 396 by the Pope to cross over to his native country in order to compose these difficulties. He asked Pope Innocent I., who sent him, to give him "the rule (*normam*) and authority of the Roman Church." In reply the Pontiff says: "If any weightier causes come under discussion, let them after Episcopal judgment be reported to the Apostolic See, as the Synod (of Sardica) lays down and a blessed custom requires."

The mission of St. Victricius evidently did not accomplish all that

was hoped from it, and in A.D. 429 St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, was sent into Britain by Pope Celestine. St. Prosper, the secretary of Pope Leo the Great, in giving his account of this mission says that he was sent by the Pope "as his vicar," who by this "endeavoured to keep this Roman island Catholic." In A.D. 447 St. Germanus paid a second visit to Britain, this time accompanied by St. Severus, Archbishop of Treves; and in A.D. 455 we know that the British followed the direction of Rome in fixing Easter.

This was the last sign of any connection between the British Church at this period and the Western world. The dark clouds of the Saxon invasion had already begun to gather, and the struggle between the pagan hordes and the then Christian people of Britain continued through more than a century and a half. In all this time little information as to the state of religion in the country is afforded from any source. Of the preceding period all that can be known with certainty has been set out briefly above, and it clearly shows the early British Church in close connection with the other Churches of the West. It proves, too, that, if we except the taint of Pelagianism which apparently to some extent infected it at the close of this period, the Church of this land from the earliest times to the middle of the fifth century was wholly orthodox and wholly Catholic. It is also not a little remarkable that almost every item of information that can be gathered about the Church of the British brings it into obvious connection with Rome as the centre of unity.

With the beginning of the fifth century the assaults of the barbarian hordes from the North on all parts of the vast Roman Empire necessitated a concentration of forces at Rome, the centre. In A.D. 412 the Imperial legions were withdrawn from Britain, and although, in response to appeals from the country, they twice again came to the assistance of the inhabitants, they finally left the land in A.D. 427. Over the history of the period which followed there hangs an impenetrable veil, hardly lifted even by story or legend, till the coming of St. Augustine a century and a half after. That this period was a time of unceasing internecine war with the invaders, and that the situation was complicated by constant and terrible struggles between the Britons themselves, and between the Britons and the men of Caledonia, seems certain. With the Saxon enemy, who strove so strenuously to dispossess them of the land, the British would have no

truce or agreement. In Italy the invading Lombards became in time so merged in the Latin population that they even adopted the language of the conquered. In Gaul, too, the people of the soil finally asserted their supremacy in the same way, and even preserved their native tongue in spite of their Frankish conquerors. But in Britain there was apparently no mingling of the races. The British either perished in the fight or were driven back into Wales and the West country. In spite of a stubborn and brave resistance, in which the Britons contested every inch of the country, the pagan invaders advanced by slow degrees from all sides till their banners met in the centre of the kingdom. The conquest of the island was, however, a laborious work, and it was not until about A.D. 585, twelve years only before the coming of St. Augustine to Kent, that the Angles succeeded in establishing the kingdom of Mercia, and the overthrow of the British was complete.

It is necessary to realise this slow progress of the Saxon conquest as well as the implacable hostility of the Britons to the pagan Northmen, who had seized upon their country, if we are to understand the condition to which all this time the British Church was of necessity reduced, and to account for the attitude of the native Christians when subsequently asked to assist in converting their enemies to the Faith. Amid the difficulty of maintaining connection with Rome and of keeping herself in touch with the other Churches of the West, the Church of this country was thrown back upon its own resources. It was necessarily left to guide itself and to preserve, as well as it might, the traditions and teachings of a time when it formed part of the Christian Church of the West. That under these conditions it would probably have become narrow and exclusive is to be expected. But that, even at the close of the dark period of time, say, from A.D. 450 to A.D. 600, it had ceased to be Catholic in any sense, or had become substantially different from what it had been in the early days of British Christianity, is at least disproved by the slender information which we now possess about it.

Practically, the works of Gildas the Briton, who wrote about A.D. 560, are very nearly the only sources of information available. Allowing for every possible exaggeration on the part of one who obviously took the blackest view as to the sufferings of his countrymen, at the hands of their pagan foes during the time of bitter

hostility, the picture he gives of the fallen state to which as a nation and as a Church the British were reduced, must be allowed to be very terrible. But, even amid the dark shadings of the picture, it is possible to glean a few items of knowledge about the religious situation, which show that the Church emerged from the trial practically as it was before. From his tract we gather that in the British Church at that time there were a great number of clerics; that the bishops, honoured and wealthy, were fulfilling the functions, and were regarded as the successors of the Apostles, and especially of "the holder of the keys of the kingdom of heaven," St. Peter. Synods, too, were held, and the priesthood and every ecclesiastical order was conferred by certain and definite rites of ordination. Monks were bound by vows, and celibacy was practised by them and by holy women devoted to God. There is evidence, too, of the cultus of the Saints; churches were dedicated to God under their memory, and the Christian altar was called "the place of the Heavenly Sacrifice."

These are indeed small items of information perhaps, but they are precious indications of the life and practices of the British Church at that time. They are given, it is true, almost by chance in the querulous letter of Gildas; but they are sufficient to show that it had clung to the Faith, in spite of the storms and distress which afflicted it for more than four generations.

Besides what may be gathered from the works of Gildas, the lives of the early Welsh Saints seem to point to the same conclusion. Their evidence, it is true, is rather that of tradition than of history; but they appear to prove the existence of many men of great personal sanctity during this sad time; and they exhibit their care in the fulfilment of their Episcopal office to preserve the Faith from error. They point, moreover, to the existence of great and observant monasteries; to the holding of Synods, and to the establishment of schools among the then oppressed Britons. Thus, to take two or three examples in the sixth century: St. David, it is said, was instructed by a disciple of St. Germanus of Auxerre in the Isle of Wight. After building a hermitage at Glastonbury he was present at the Synod of Brevi in A.D. 519, which had been called to legislate against the same errors of Pelagianism that had so long afflicted the British Church. At the close of this Synod St. Dubritius, Bishop of Caerleon, insisted on resigning his see to St. David, and this latter in the

course of his ministry founded many monasteries and held at least one other Synod, at a place called Victoria. His death occurred in A.D. 544.

The same above-named Bishop of Caerleon, St. Dubritius, consecrated a Briton named St. Daniel as the first Bishop of Bangor. Here St. Daniel established a large college. He too was present in the Synod of Brevi, and dying in A.D. 545 was buried in the Isle of Bardney. This place was the most sacred spot in the eyes of the British Christians, and was called by them "the Rome of Britain." It was to this place of holy memories that St. Dubritius, after resigning his see, retired to die, and according to the cherished traditions of the Church of Britain, here reposed the bodies of some twenty thousand holy martyrs and confessors. Another British Saint of this period was St. Kentigern, who was born in A.D. 516 and died only in A.D. 601 in the north, after St. Augustine had commenced his work in the south. St. Kentigern was consecrated Bishop of Glasgow by an Irish bishop who had been invited over for the purpose. Driven from his see by civil disturbances he fled to Wales, where he lived from about A.D. 543 to 560, and where he established great schools. He returned, however, to his own see, and continued to work there until his death at an advanced age. His companion, again, was St. Asaph, renowned in Wales for the purity and sanctity of his life.

The above names of holy men, still revered and honoured by the Catholic Church as Saints, will serve merely as examples of the great servants of God who lived at this period. They and many others laboured to preserve the Catholic faith in the British Church, which through stress of circumstances had been severed from any connection with the other Churches of the West. They prove at least that the British Church, even in this time of gloom and isolation, was true and faithful to all the substantial points of faith and practice. In fact, at the close of this dark period, St. Augustine names only two points in which Catholics in Britain differed from the Catholics of the West who followed the Roman usages—the date of the celebration of Easter and some customs as to the administration of the rite of Baptism. What the latter difference was must ever remain a matter of conjecture, and the former is explained by the fact that the change in the date of keeping Easter was made after the enforced isolation of the British from the other Western Churches. Moreover, the

Easter to which the British clung so tenaciously was really an old Roman Easter, fixed by an earlier Roman cycle. The mere fact, however, that no other point of divergence between Rome and Britain is noted is sufficient proof that in all else there was practical agreement, and that the Church in this land had clung to what it held to be Catholic with praiseworthy tenacity.

II

THE WORK OF THE ROMAN MONKS

The Saxon conquest of Britain made it once more a pagan country. Almost every trace of the flourishing British Church had been destroyed during the course of the long conflict except where in Wales and Cornwall the Christian people had found a refuge from their enemies. Of the seven divisions or kingdoms into which the various conquering tribes of Northmen had partitioned the land, the most important and powerful in the last decade of the sixth century was that of Kent. Its king, Ethelbert, had forced his immediate neighbours to acknowledge his sway, and his "Empire," to use St. Bede's expression, was spread along the eastern coast to the Humber, whilst the East Saxons acknowledged him as overlord.

Ethelbert, although a pagan, was not unacquainted with the teachings of the Christian religion. It was probably the belief of most of the British slaves in his dominions, and it was certainly professed by his queen Bertha, the daughter of Haribert, the Frankish king of Paris. In fact, at the Royal Court at Canterbury the queen had apparently for many years before the coming of the Roman missionaries enjoyed the ministrations of the Christian prelate, Luidhard, who had accompanied her from Gaul. It was to this king, thus in some measure prepared for the good tidings of the Gospel, that God in His Providence sent the Apostles of our race.

The story of their coming is known to all. It was what we should perhaps call chance that first directed attention to the spiritual needs

of our Saxon ancestors. Some fair-haired youths in the market-place at Rome attracted the attention of St. Gregory the Great a few years before he became Pope in A.D. 590. On hearing that they were pagans he was fired with a desire to become himself the Apostle of a race which from their appearance deserved, as he said, to be called rather "Angels" than "Angles." Once, indeed, he actually started on his missionary enterprise, but was recalled by the clamours of the Roman people, who feared to lose him from their midst. Though laid aside, his project was not abandoned, and a few years after he was raised to St. Peter's throne he dispatched Augustine, one of the monks of his old monastery, with a band of devoted followers to accomplish his design.

The mission finally reached its destination and landed in the Isle of Thanet about Easter time A.D. 597. King Ethelbert received St. Augustine and his forty monks, listened to their message, and promised to ponder upon it. He kept his word so well that on June 1, A.D. 597, he and numbers of his subjects bowed their heads to the sacred yoke of the Gospel, and received the Sacrament of Baptism. Meanwhile the Christian Queen Bertha had provided for the missionaries in the ancient Church of St. Martin at Canterbury, which had been originally British, and which for some years had been used by Bishop Luidhard for the spiritual wants of the Queen and her Christian followers.

Later in the same year, A.D. 597, St. Augustine was instructed to repair to Arles, there to receive Episcopal consecration at the hands of Vergilius, the papal representative in Gaul. This he did, and became first Archbishop of the English. Anxious to understand exactly what powers he really possessed, he applied to the Pope for information. To this St. Gregory the Great replied: "*We* give you no authority over the bishops of Gaul, because in ancient times the Bishop of Arles received the pallium from my predecessors, and we do not wish to deprive him of the ancient authority he has received. But as for all the bishops of Britain we commit them to your care, that the unlearned may be taught, the weak strengthened by persuasion, and the perverse corrected by authority."

The Pope further provided for the newly established Church in England by giving St. Augustine power to create twelve suffragan sees in the southern part of the country and twelve in the north,

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entirely fruitful, and Kent became the centre of religious life, and at the same time, the centre of a new civilisation. In the earliest laws of our country can be traced the influence, if not in fact the hand, of the Roman missioner, our Apostle.

St. Augustine died May 26, A.D. 604. By this time he had consecrated three of the band of missionaries sent from Rome by St. Gregory as bishops, namely, St. Laurence as his successor at Canterbury, St. Justus as Bishop of Rochester; and St. Mellitus as Bishop of London.

It was St. Mellitus who, whilst in Rome in A.D. 610, assisted at a Council and signed the decrees as first Bishop of London. He had gone to the Eternal City to confer with Pope Boniface on the affairs of the English Church, and St. Bede tells us that he brought back to this country a copy of the laws and decrees of this Council "to the Churches of the English to be prescribed and observed."

In A.D. 616 King Ethelbert died. For a while the infant Church was now imperilled through the necessary opposition of the missionaries to the evil passions of his son and successor. At the same time the sons of Saberect reverted to paganism and expelled St. Mellitus from London, and St. Justus from Rochester, forcing them to take refuge in Gaul. St. Laurence, the successor of St. Augustine, was about to follow his brethren into exile when a last attempt to recall the king of Kent to the profession of the Christian faith proved successful. The Archbishop remained at Canterbury, and the two other bishops returned from across the sea. From this time, supported by the influence of the kings of Kent, the Church maintained its position in that kingdom.

St. Justus of Rochester became fourth Archbishop of Canterbury, and in A.D. 619 Pope Boniface, in sending him the pallium, bade him "ordain bishops as occasion should require." The task of St. Augustine's companions to succeed him in the archiepiscopal chair was the monk Honorius. He was consecrated in A.D. 625, and Pope Honorius in writing to him says: "We give you authority to act in the place (*vice*) of the Blessed Prince of the Apostles. . . . For which reason also, in our special love for you, we have sent you the Pallium for use in celebrating the said ordinations, that you may be able to ordain in a manner pleasing to God by the authority of our commands." In other words, Episcopal ordinations

in England were to be effected by authority of the Pope. Honorius also gave him instructions as to the consecration of his successor. "When either of the prelates of Canterbury and York," he writes, "shall depart this life, the survivor shall have power to ordain another, so that it may not be necessary always to travel to Rome, or so great a distance by sea or land, for the ordination of an Archbishop."

It would be a great mistake, however, to suppose that the efforts and influence of this band of missionaries from Rome, with its centre at Canterbury, were confined to Kent and the neighbouring kingdoms, or came to an end at the death of St. Augustine. The work of the monks in reality only began in the lifetime of the great Pope who had sent them, and who died in March A.D. 604, shortly before St. Augustine. The devoted Roman missionaries, after making their position secure at Canterbury, extended the field of their labours. It was, in fact, from them and their allies that the Anglo-Saxon peoples first heard the Gospel preached from the Cheviots to the English Channel. That is to say, the whole Eastern half of England, with one exception, first received the Faith from the disciples of St. Augustine.

In A.D. 625 Edwin, King of Northumbria, asked in marriage Ethelburga, the daughter of the late King Ethelbert. She was of course a Christian, whilst Edwin was still a pagan, and it was stipulated that she should be allowed the free exercise of her religion in the North, and should take with her as her chaplain the monk Paulinus, one of the followers of St. Augustine. This was conceded, and St. Paulinus was consecrated bishop. It seems probable that to this fact, that for the first time a bishop had been sent into the northern parts, must be referred the direction of the Pope at this period, as to Canterbury and York.

St. Paulinus did not lose the opportunity of spreading the Faith, which the Providence of God had given him. He quickly converted King Edwin to the religion of his queen, and during the eight years, from A.D. 625 to A.D. 633, which he spent in the North, his activity extended almost to the present borders of Scotland. By Easter A.D. 629 the supremacy of Edwin stretched practically over the whole of Britain. Bede even ventures to speak of the "Empire of the English" which the great Bretwalda had established,

and an unwonted peace reigned for a brief space from the Forth to the Solent. Under these conditions Paulinus began his apostolate. Yorkshire, the centre of Edwin's government, was the chief, as it was the first, scene of his work; but even his personal labours were by no means confined to the limits of this great county. He first turned to evangelise the part of the country where now is modern Lincolnshire; and here, as at York, a noble basilica of stone long remained a monument of his apostolic zeal, and an evidence of the firm footing on which he had established the Christian religion in those parts. It was here, in the stone church at Lincoln, that Paulinus consecrated Honorius to the See of Canterbury; and, half a century after his death, there were still people at Lincoln who remembered their first Apostle well, and who could describe his slight stoop, his emaciated face, his refined features, his Roman nose, and—though he had been well nigh forty years in England—his Roman black hair, a contrast to the fair-haired English. His was a presence—so they said—take him all in all, inspiring a veneration not unmixed with awe.

Having made good his position both in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, St. Paulinus turned northward to evangelise the people of our modern Northumberland. Here his converts were numbered by thousands, and when St. Bede wrote a century later the people still cherished their remembrances of this period of special Providence. It seems to have been one Lent time that the great wave of grace swept over the northern country. The now Christian King Edwin and his queen were spending the time at a royal habitation in the Cheviots and Paulinus was with them. In all probability the locality was where now stands the small village of Kirk-Newton in the northern Cheviots, and where the dedication of the church to St. Gregory, and the existence of a "Gregory hill" and a "Gregory well," all immediately connect the place with the memory of the Pope who had dispatched St. Paulinus to England. Here, too, local tradition still points to the spot whereon stood the royal house of Edwin with the stream flowing in front of the site. At this place in the far north for six-and-thirty days the Saint devoted his whole time and energy to instructing and baptising. The people flocked from far and near to listen to the preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and from early morning till late evening the Apostle occupied

himself without remission in his Christian labours, baptising in the
[illegible]
stream which flowed near the royal residence those whom he had
instructed in the Faith. In Bede's days, as he tells us—and he knew
this part of the country well—though the royal dwelling had long
been destroyed, the memory of Paulinus preaching and of the great
harvest of souls he had gathered to the Lord among the simple
people of the northern country was still fresh and green.

The eight years of Paulinus' work in the North were as full of
fruit as they were of promise, and Pope Honorius endeavoured to
create a metropolitan See at York by sending the pallium of an
Archbishop to him. His plan was Roman. He aimed at estab-
lishing Christian settlements from north to south of eastern
England which at that time was the seat of the dominant power
in the island. This plan was brought within the range of reali-
sation through the resumption of the preaching of Christianity in
East Anglia—now our modern Norfolk and Suffolk—by St. Felix
the Burgundian in A.D. 631. Brought over by King Sigebert, on his
return from exile in Gaul, Felix passed, as it were, his missionary
novitiate in Canterbury. At his own earnest request Archbishop
Honorius sent him to resume the work of instructing the peoples
of East Anglia. From Canterbury, too, it would appear, Felix
brought teachers and masters for his own monastic school. On
his death, after seventeen energetic and fruitful years of labour
in this portion of the Lord's vineyard, Archbishop Honorius con-
secrated his deacon Thomas, a native-born Englishman, to the vacant
see. Five years later—that is, in A.D. 652—upon the death of Bishop
Thomas, the Archbishop raised to the episcopal dignity in his place a
Kentish man, Bereteis, to whom was given the Christian and Roman
name of Boniface. Again, the apostle of Wessex, St. Birinus,
fresh from Italy, sent by the Pope to aid in the harvest field, and
especially directed by him to push forward into the inmost recesses
of the country which had as yet not received the Gospel of Christ,
would naturally turn to Canterbury to confer with his countrymen
there and to remain in close alliance with them.

When Archbishop Honorius died in A.D. 653, for eighteen months
there was no successor chosen, and then the first Archbishop of
English birth was elected, in the person of one Frithona, who took
the name of Deusdedit. By this time, when the Faith was but

III

THE CELTIC MISSIONARIES

The Church founded in Northumbria by St. Paulinus with the help of St. Edwin, the convert king, quickly suffered great misfortune. In A.D. 633 the power of the Bretwalda was broken and his kingdom was ravaged. On October 13th of that year he himself perished in the battle of Hatfield, which he fought against the combined forces of Penda, the pagan king of the Mercians, and his ally Cadwallon, the Christian king of the Britons. Actuated by the old race hatred, this chief layman of the British Church eclipsed his heathen comrade in arms by the ferocity with which he attacked the new-made Christians of Northumbria. "Though he had the name and profession of a Christian," writes St. Bede, "he was so barbarous in disposition and behaviour, that he spared neither the female sex nor the innocent age of children. Nor did he pay any regard to the Christian religion, which had sprung up amongst them."

The overthrow of Edwin's power was swift and complete, and it involved the temporary ruin of the new-born Church in Northumbria. St. Paulinus himself was forced to fly before the ruthless invaders, and accompanied Queen Ethelburga by sea back to her old home in Kent. Basso, one of the late King Edwin's chief officials, also escaped with the royal children, and carried with him to Kent, as if in proof of the thorough Christian character of Edwin's kingdom, the great golden cross and the golden chalice, consecrated for use in the Christian Sacrifice, which in Bede's days were still to be seen at Canterbury. St. Paulinus never returned to the North. At

the request of Archbishop Honorius, and with the sanction of King Eadbald, he filled the see of Rochester which was then vacant, and there he died in A.D. 644.

St. Paulinus' mission in the North came to an end towards the close of the year A.D. 633. The date is important if we would understand the true course of events in the history of the Church in Northumbria. For twelve months Penda and Cadwallon ravaged the dominions, of the late King Edwin. Before the close of A.D. 634, however, St. Oswald had come out of his exile in the northern parts of Scotland, and had so beaten back the invaders, as to be in a position to restore peace and Christian teaching to the country. To him belongs the glory of continuing and extending the missions of Paulinus in Northumbria. In his early years St. Oswald had found a refuge among the northern Picts; he had there been instructed in the Faith, and received baptism, at the hands of the Celtic (Scotic or Irish) monks, who at Iona were carrying on the work begun by St. Columba in those regions. To these friends of his youth Oswald naturally turned to secure religious teachers for his people, hoping by their help to consolidate and extend the Christian Church which Paulinus had founded during the years of his active missionary work. His purpose was to build on the foundations already laid, even as in subsequent years he completed and dedicated the stone church at York, which the Roman Apostle of the North had commenced. The new labourers thus called into the vineyard of the Lord were members of the great Celtic or Irish Church. A few words will be necessary to understand what this really means. At the coming of St. Augustine, besides the Britons, there were two other Christian peoples in this island—the Scots and the Picts. Of the first, the Scots, St. Prosper says that in A.D. 431 many were followers of Christ, and in that year Pope St. Celestine ordained Palladius and sent him as bishop "to the Scots who believed in Christ." The real conversion of the nation, however, was effected, not long before the coming of St. Augustine to Kent, by St. Columba, the great Irish missionary. In A.D. 565 that Saint crossed over the sea and settled with his monks at Iona. The Picts of north and east Caledonia were converted by St. Ninian, who was consecrated their bishop in A.D. 394 by Pope Siricius. Neither of these two peoples, although engaged in hostilities with the Saxons, had, like the Britons, that deep racial hatred

for them as people who had despoiled them, and still held their possessions.

Like the British Church, the Celtic Churches differed in certain points from the discipline of Rome. Like the British Church, too, these differences did not pertain to the Faith, but to certain practices to which they had been accustomed from their earliest teachings, and to which they clung with affectionate pertinacity. Plainly, if the singular, isolated character of the Columban missionary enterprises be disregarded, as they may since they had no place in the subsequent controversies in England, the differences between the Celtic and the Roman observances may be reduced to the same as those in which the British and the Roman differed: namely, the date of Easter and the shape of the clerical tonsure. Whatever other variations there may have been in rites and prayers, these are admitted to have been slight, and to use the words of one who has made a special study of this subject, it is certain that "everything proves that Columba, and his followers, however they may have differed in some of their customs from other Churches, never at any time departed from the Catholic unity in matters of Faith."

In regard to Rome and the Pope and the unity of the Christian Church the opinion of the Celtic missionaries may be best gauged by that of St. Columbanus himself. In a letter, written after he had settled at Bobbio in Italy, the Saint addresses Pope Boniface as the "Pastor of pastors." Of himself and his companions he says: "We are the scholars of SS. Peter and Paul, and of all the disciples, subscribing to the Holy Ghost, and to the Divine Canon. All are Irish inhabitants of the remotest part of the whole world, receiving nothing save what is the angelic and Apostolic doctrine. None of us has been a heretic, none a Jew, none a schismatic, but the Faith, just as it was at first delivered by you the successors of the holy Apostles, is held unshaken. . . . I strive to stand thee up as the prince of leaders, for unto thee belongeth the peril of the whole army of the Lord. . . . Fearing for I mean unto thee alone, who from among the princes art the only hope, having authority through the privileges of the Apostle Peter. . . . We are bound (*ligamur*) unto the Chair of Peter, for although Rome is great and renowned through that Chair alone is she looked on as great and illustrious amongst us. . . . On

account of the two Apostles of Christ you are almost celestial, and

Rome is the head of the whole world and of the churches.

It was to these sons of Columba, trained at Iona in his spirit, that St. Oswald of Northumbria turned in A.D. 635 to obtain religious teachers for his people. His first attempt did not prove a success. The prelate sent was a man rigorous and inflexible, who proposed to his hearers precepts more suitable for the ascetics amongst whom he had been trained, than for ordinary Christians of the world. In the short space during which he remained amongst them, the people were not found to respond to his teaching—and no wonder! He returned to his monastic home at Iona with a report of his failure, and represented the English as a barbarous, stiff-necked and intractable race.

It was then that there appeared on the scene one of the most beautiful of the many beautiful characters that meet us in the pages of St. Bede's History. St. Aidan comes to us utterly unknown, but portrays himself completely in the first words he speaks. He had listened to the report of his brother monk about those obstinate English and, though discouraged by the account, he could not make up his mind to give up, in hope of a work undertaken for God and the love of souls.

"It seems to me, my father," he said, "that you have been over rigid with these uninstructed hearers, and, contrary to Apostolic practice, have not offered them first the milk of milder doctrine, until little by little, strengthened with the Divine Word, they became capable of receiving the more perfect counsels and walking in the higher paths of virtue."

Aidan had felt that the methods of the Roman missionaries in the Heptarchy, to which St. Oswald had now called the Scotic monks, had been conceived on sound practical lines. They had proceeded on the plan that these English people must be approached by the way of good sense and not by that of mere stern precept, if the end was to be attained. Thus in distant Iona, perchance without even having heard their names, the Christian charity animating St. Aidan's soul already laid the foundation for that respect and affection which was to characterise his relations with the Roman monks, when he was later to come into contact with them and their works, during the seventeen years of his active missionary life.

By his own words St. Aidan had unwittingly designated himself as

the most fit to enter upon the Apostolate in northern England, and carry on the work which St. Paulinus had so nobly and seriously begun, and from which he had been compelled by events to retire, so short a time before. It is pleasant to link in our memories the name of the Roman Paulinus with that of the Celtic Aidan as their work was linked in reality. So far from history teaching us to see in the Roman mission in the South and the Scotic or Irish mission in the North two hostile camps or rival "communions," plain facts show two bodies of men animated by one sole desire—the desire to propagate the one Faith of the one Church of Christ. Roman or Irish, they knew no other. Roman or Irish, they laboured for no other.

The preaching of the Gospel to the Anglo-Saxon people was, it is true, divided between the Celtic and the Roman missionaries, and this being so, it was impossible that there should not be frequent contact between the two. What was the result? Whilst the Britons "held the religion of the English as nothing and would not in anything communicate with them more than they would with Pagans," the Romans and the Celts met together and acted together in a way that proves beyond question that in the beginning there was no enmity between them. St. Birinus, for example, "who had come into Britain by the desire of Pope Honorius" made equal use in preaching the Gospel of Cynigils, king of the West Saxons, whom he had converted and baptised, and of St. Oswald, King of Northumbria, the friend of St. Aidan. Though baptised in the Scotic Church and an undoubted follower of their Celtic customs, St. Oswald stood godfather to Cynigils on his baptism by the Roman Birinus. St. Honorius of Canterbury, St. Felix of Dunwich and their companions, held St. Aidan in deep veneration. It was with St. Aidan's encouragement that King Oswy sought in marriage Eanfled, St. Edwin's daughter, who had been educated in Kent. If she brought with her a chaplain thence and observed Easter according to the Roman computation, whilst her husband followed the Celtic custom, there is nothing ever so slight to indicate that this was regarded on either side as a breach of "communion," but only as a legitimate concession to the prejudices of early association and teaching. James the deacon, St. Paulinus' disciple, never left the charge committed to him at York. He remained there during the

whole period covered by the Scotic mission till the Synod of Whitby, when he was succeeded by the Roman priest who had come to the North as Queen Eanfled's chaplain. Lastly, to take one more example —St. Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, was a convert of St. Paulinus. She afterwards lived for a year in a convent in the south, and even wished to pass over into France; she was, however, recalled to the north by St. Aidan and made Abbess of Whitby, where in the celebrated Synod at that place she took the side of the Celtic customs, but bowed to the final decision.

With the death of St. Aidan, in A.D. 651, we soon begin to feel, as we read the pages of St. Bede, the existence of a certain tension. It will be sufficient here to note that the ecclesiastical practices on which conflicting views arose were the two already named—the date of the Paschal celebration and the shape of the tonsure. The attentive reader of St. Bede's pages can easily gather, however, that there were other influences at work. Matters likely to be productive of dissension not connected with matters of religion, or rather of religious discipline, were really the efficient causes of the subsequent troubles.

In A.D. 651 St. Finan succeeded St. Aidan. So far as can be learnt from our history he experienced no more difficulty than his predecessor. It was, however, an indiscreet compatriot of theirs, Ronan by name, who stirred up all the difficulty. He had heard elsewhere about the new Easter and another tonsure, and had adopted them. Accordingly, full of his new acquirements, and fired by zeal not tempered by any discretion, he attacked the aged St. Finan for his adherence to his old customs—customs which the venerable man had been taught in his childhood at Iona, which he reverenced, which he had practised ever since, and which he had been allowed to observe in peace, without so much as a remonstrance from those who followed the common practice taught them by their Roman missionaries. Ronan's vigour had, it would seem, borne down the opposition of many of his countrymen, and his attacks had led others at least to inquire. This measure of success, however, did not satisfy him; so, paying no heed to the venerable age and sacred character of his fellow-countryman, he assailed St. Finan, as St. Bede relates, with violence and ferocity. The rest was what is to be expected. The old man grew obstinate under violence and invective, and would then have it that his way

alone was right, and that other practices were wrong and should be prohibited.

It is unnecessary to pursue the course of the controversy which issued in the Synod of Whitby in A.D. 664. The result was final and decisive, and it issued in the retirement from Britain of St. Finan's successor, St. Colman, and his English and Irish friends. This finally closed the history of Celtic missionary labours in England. Those of St. Colman's friends of both races who remained accepted the common Easter and the Roman tonsure. Amongst them were men whose names are held in the deepest veneration in the land to this day. It may suffice here to mention one name only, that of St. Cuthbert of Lindisfarne.

The departure of the Celtic missionaries, who were unwilling to submit to the decisions of Whitby, and not, of course, terminate the work of the Irish in the formation of the Anglo-Saxon Church in this country, for many remained behind in England and conformed themselves to the Roman usages, were largely instrumental in converting and instructing the people of the north. Their influence can be traced in the native art of the north in the illuminations and in the writings, for a long period after the Synod of Whitby. Above all else, they seem to have been destined to foster and consolidate the devotional life of the English people. To the staid and measured language which characterised the prayers of the Roman Church the Celtic clergy added an element of unction and the happy expression of devotion and fervour which make the prayers of our Saxon forefathers so useful in stimulating the piety of faithful souls even in our own times.

Over all the work of the Celtic and Roman missionaries in England there presided the spirit of Rome and the Roman Mission. The historical influence exercised over English life and its successors in the making of England can hardly be questioned. The historian Green has fully discerned what the genius of Rome did for the country. "Nothing is more characteristic," he says, "of Roman Christianity than its administrative organisation. Its ordered hierarchy of Bishops, priests, and lower clergy, its judicial and deliberative machinery, its courts, and its councils had become a part of its very existence, and settled with it on every land that it won. Gregory, as we have seen, had planted out the yet heathen Britain into an ordered Church, . . . and though the carrying out of

this scheme in its actual form had proved impossible, yet it was certain that the first chart of the Roman See, now that the ground was clear, would be to replace it by some analogous arrangement. But no such religious organisation could stamp itself on the English nation without telling on the civil organisation about. The regular subordination of priest to bishop, of bishop to Primate (and we may add, of Primate to Pope) in the administration of the Church would supply a model on which the civil organisation of the State would consciously but irresistibly shape itself. The gathering of the clergy in national Synods would inevitably lead the way to national gatherings for civil legislation. Above all, if the nation in its spiritual capacity came to recognise the authority of a single Primate, it would insensibly be led in its temporal capacity to recognise a single sovereign. . . . The hopes of such an organisation rested in the submission of the English States to the Church of Rome."

To some these words may seem far-fetched and exaggerated, but without this influence of Rome, making for unification, the welding of the peoples, and even nations, in this land into the one English folk might have been indefinitely postponed.

IV

THE SAXON CHURCH

The Synod of Whitby, in A.D. 664, by finally settling all outstanding differences, made easy the organisation of the Saxon Church as one united whole. Up to this time it had not been possible to carry out the plan of St. Gregory, or the later direction of Pope Honorius, for the ecclesiastical government of the country. The joint action of two kings, representing the north and the south of the country, was now a public recognition of the unity of the Church, and an augury of what ecclesiastical unity afterwards effected in bringing about national unity.

The See of Canterbury had been vacant for some time, and as no election had been made in A.D. 667, Oswy, King of Northumbria, and Egbert of Kent took counsel together on "the state of the English Church." Although "educated by the Scotch," as St. Bede says, "Oswy fully understood that the Roman was the Catholic and Apostolic Church," and felt constrained to try and put an end to the vacancy in the metropolitical See. As a result of the royal conference the two kings "agreed to the election and consent of the Church of the English people," which had nominated a priest of Canterbury, Wighard, as best fitted to fill the vacant archiepiscopal chair. The king forthwith sent the elect to Rome with a request that the Pope would consecrate him as "Archbishop of the English." This, however, was not to be. Wighard and most of his companions were carried off by the plague, and Pope Vitalian wrote to say that he would, as soon as possible, himself choose an Archbishop for the country.

After a brief delay the Pope, in A.D. 668, appointed and consecrated St. Theodore as "Archbishop of Britain." The new metropolitan was a Greek monk, a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, and a man of the highest culture and integrity. To him the Church in this country was indebted for the establishment of its schools of learning and the organisation of its ecclesiastical life on a sound and lasting basis. The new Archbishop was accompanied upon his journey to England by Abbot Hadrian, upon whom the Pope's choice had first fallen, but who had refused the honour, and by St. Benet Biscop, a Northumbrian noble, who had lately become a monk, and who, being on a visit to Rome, was induced by the Pope to travel back to England as their guide. Archbishop Theodore reached Canterbury, having been considerably delayed, only on May 27, A.D. 669. After the long vacancy of the See there were naturally many matters to claim his immediate attention. It was above all things necessary, if the Church was to be orderly and organised, to establish the diocesan and parochial system in place of that of the vast and ill-defined territorial districts, which up to this time had been administered by the bishops and priests, and to confine the care of each bishop to his own special diocese.

In some ways circumstances favoured St. Theodore in carrying out this great and necessary work. A plague had lately carried off great numbers, including many priests and bishops; so that on his arrival the Archbishop found only four bishops in the whole of the country; and one of these, Boniface of East Anglia, died shortly afterwards. As was to be expected, Theodore encountered many difficulties and much opposition in the prosecution of his design, and some matters hard to settle he inherited from the chaotic state of affairs which had existed prior to his arrival. The case of St. Wilfrid was one of this latter class. Wilfrid was a Northumbrian monk who, having spent much time in Rome, became a convert from Celtic customs. He was mainly instrumental in bringing about the settlement of the disputes at Whitby. Shortly after the Synod he was nominated Bishop of Lindisfarne, and, as there was then no Archbishop in the country, he was sent to Gaul for consecration by the kings and Council at his own request, explicitly for the reason that he would find there Catholic bishops in communion with the Holy See. It is also noteworthy that the kings and Council insisted that the elect

should be one "who would desire to himself embrace the discipline of the Apostolic See and teach it to others." Wilfrid's absence lasted so long that another monk, St. Chad, was appointed and consecrated in his stead, and transferred his See from Lindisfarne to York. On Wilfrid's return as bishop he did not at first insist upon his obvious rights; but acquiesced in the appointment of St. Chad and went for a time to his monastery at Ripon. He then started on a missionary tour, with the object of securing greater union with Rome. The case, however, remained unsettled, and St. Theodore finally had to deal with it. He was not long in coming to a decision, and at once bade St. Chad resign his See to the rightfully elected bishop, St. Wilfrid. This St. Chad did at once without question, and he was subsequently made Bishop of Lichfield by the Archbishop.

It is, of course, impossible here to deal with the question of St. Wilfrid's Roman appeals. It should, however, be noted that his first and final restoration to his rights was "by the orders of the Apostolic See," and "because of the authority of the blessed Pontiffs." His diocese was, indeed, divided, but the decision was part of the papal judgment, and the portion Wilfrid received was his own choice. Moreover, Archbishop Theodore's repentance for his long hostility to Saint Wilfrid and their complete reconciliation should not be forgotten.

Besides the great work of bringing order and regularity into the ecclesiastical government of Britain, which occupied much time and attention, St. Theodore was also engaged in establishing centres of learning in the country. He began with the school of Canterbury, afterwards so celebrated, of which St. Benet Biscop became the first master, and in which the Archbishop himself taught Sacred Scripture. Subsequently Biscop founded other monastic schools at Wearmouth and Jarrow, which the name of Venerable Bede, the historian of our race, has immortalised by his vast learning and sound scholarship.

In A.D. 673 Theodore held his first Synod at Hertford. He there introduced himself as: "I, Theodore, appointed Bishop of Canterbury by the Apostolic See." This was recognised by all; and even Wilfrid, in the midst of the quarrels, fully acknowledged Theodore as papal representative in England. "I do not dare to accuse him," he said, "because he is sent by the Apostolic See."

Ten years after Theodore's arrival in Britain, in A.D. 678, Pope Agatho formally approved of the organisation established by the Archbishop in the Saxon Church, and confirmed the subdivision of the large territorial districts into which till this time the land had been divided. The hierarchy was now to consist of one metropolitan and eleven suffragans. The year following this, A.D. 679, St. Bede relates a striking proof of the unity of the Faith, which within three-quarters of a century from the death of St. Augustine, existed throughout the entire country, although it was still divided into several kingdoms. Archbishop Theodore assembled the first Provincial Synod at Hatfield, and the Abbot of St. Martin's at Rome attended as the representative of the Pope, having been charged "to inform himself concerning the faith of the English Church, so as to give an account thereof on his return to Rome." Pope Agatho wished to inquire "in Britain, as in other provinces of the Christian world," whether "the Church was all knit together in the one Faith." The Archbishop of Canterbury consequently, in the presence of the papal legate, "inquired into the doctrine of each prelate, and found all unanimously agreed in the Catholic Faith." A copy of this unanimous profession of the English Church was given to the Abbot legate to be carried to Rome, and there, as St. Bede relates, "it was most thankfully received by the Apostolic Pope and all who heard it."

Archbishop Theodore died in A.D. 690, having fully accomplished the work for England which God's Providence had designed. The disposition of the English hierarchy under one Archbishop at Canterbury, which was decreed by Pope Agatho on the advice of St. Theodore, remained for a long while undisturbed. About A.D. 733, however, the then Bishop of York, Egbert, was urged by his old master St. Bede to apply to the Pope to have the original plan of St. Gregory the Great for a second metropolitan see at York carried out. Two years later, in A.D. 735, Pope Gregory III. granted the application, sent the pallium to Egbert and raised York to the rank of the metropolitical church of a northern province: this disposition of the Church in England into two provinces practically remained unchanged till the eve of the Reformation. There was, however, one exception when for a brief period, more from political motives than to meet any need of the Church, Offa, the powerful King of Mercia, obtained the

temporary dismemberment of the southern province by the creation of Lichfield as a third metropolitan see, with the other Mercian sees as suffragan. This was immediately after the Legatine Councils at which the legates George and Theophylact received the obedience of all the English bishops about A.D. 787, and it was only obtained by the king, as William of Malmesbury states, after he had "wearied (the Pope, Adrian) for a long time with plausible assertions." Higbert, the new metropolitan, was, however, the first and last Archbishop of Lichfield. A few years later Pope Leo III. was approached by Ethelheard, the Archbishop, on the matter, and the English prelates also represented to the King of Mercia the unjust and impolitic action of his predecessor in obtaining the division of the Canterbury province. King Kenulph of Mercia thereupon wrote two letters to the Pope leaving the decision entirely to his wisdom, since as he said he "deemed it fitting to have due regard in all things to St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, and to submit with meekness to all Apostolical Constitutions." He protested that he was "ready even to lay down his life" for Pope Leo, "for the sake of the Apostolic office," and declared that "no Christian could presume to run counter to Leo's Apostolic decisions." Pope Leo's verdict, in A.D. 802, abolished the privilege of Lichfield and reinstated Canterbury as the sole metropolitan see of the south. Writing as to this decision to King Kenulph the Pontiff says: "We have bestowed on the Archbishop of Canterbury such a prelateship that if any of his subjects—kings, princes, or peoples—transgress his precept in the Lord, he shall excommunicate the offender till he is penitent."

To complete the story of this episode in the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church, it is necessary to refer to the great Council of Cloveshoe, held a few years later, in A.D. 803. The preamble of its acts recites that "the Apostolic Pope had sent into Britain an authoritative precept of his prerogative, commanding the honour of St. Augustine's see to be restored, with all its dioceses, just as St. Gregory, the Apostle and master of our race, had arranged." To carry out this ordinance the assembled prelates, "with the co-operation of God and the Apostolic Lord, Pope Leo," confirmed the Primacy to Canterbury. And, moreover, "with the consent and licence of the Apostolic Lord, Pope Leo," they declared the archiepiscopal dignity, granted

by Pope Adrian to Lichfield, to be abrogated "because it was procured by surreptitious and unfair suggestions."

At the time of this Council of Cloveshoe two centuries had elapsed since St. Augustine had set foot on English soil. The Church he came to establish was now fully organised and developed. What the Faith of this Church was, and how closely it clung to Rome as the centre of Unity, may be known by an incident recorded as having taken place in that meeting, at which many nobles as well as bishops and abbots of the province were present. Ethelheard, the Archbishop of Canterbury, rising up in the assembly publicly put this question: "What was the Catholic Faith they held; what was the Christianity which they practised?" "With one voice," we read, "they replied: 'Be it known to your Paternity that the Faith we hold is that which was planted in the beginning by the Holy, Roman and Apostolic See, under the direction of the most blessed Pope Gregory; and what we believe without wavering, we are anxious to practise as far as we can.'"

In rapidly sketching the growth of the Church in England many items of great interest in its history have necessarily been passed over without notice. To make the story of this time at all complete, or to attempt to give details is obviously impossible within the narrow limits of these few pages: one or two incidents only can be touched upon. The name of Archbishop Egbert (735–766) has been already mentioned as having obtained the pallium for the Church of York. Besides having been the pupil of St. Bede his chief claim to remembrance, is that, under the influence of his master, he established a great school at York on the model of Canterbury, to which flocked scholars from Gaul and Germany. From the York school came the celebrated Alcuin (735–800), the great master mind which directed the revival of letters under Charlemagne and relit the lamp of learning throughout the Frankish dominions.

No more certain token of a lively faith can be found in a Church or a nation than the missionary zeal and enterprise which seeks to carry the blessings of the Gospel to those still ignorant of it. It is consequently the best proof of the complete Catholic tone and temper of the Anglo-Saxon Church that, when by the close of the seventh century it was fully established in the soil of England and in the hearts of the people, eager missionaries were ready at the peril of

their lives to preach Christ Crucified to those who, in the impenetrable forests of Germany and the inhospitable lands of Northern Europe, were still buried in the darkness of paganism. Among such glorious messengers of peace from our race may be named St. Willibrord (653–739), the Apostle of Frisia, and St. Boniface (680–755), the Apostle of Germany, with their English companions. What they achieved in the service of the Gospel and civilisation is written large on the early pages of German history.

All during the first two centuries that followed the conversion of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers to the Faith, which may well be called the golden age of the Saxon Church, the Catholic religion and the Catholic spirit was ever gaining deeper hold on the minds of the people and striking stronger roots in their hearts. Churches were built and beautified. Monasteries and convents, where "the more perfect way" could be followed and protection was afforded from the rough surroundings of a young civilisation, sprung up all over the face of the land. The catalogue of names even of these havens of rest and peace would be too long to print here, as also would be the list of holy men and women who were recognised as special servants of God, and who made this island glorious by their virtues and illustrious in the annals of the Christian Church. God's call to the cloister was not confined to the ordinary people, but nobles and even kings and queens received it and unhesitatingly answered the summons. Ethelred, King of Mercia, Cenred, who succeeded him, Offa of East Anglia, and many others exchanged their crowns for the monk's cowl. St. Edith and numerous other holy nuns were daughters of kings who preferred the cloister to the palace. Cadwalla resigned his throne to go to Rome and the tombs of the Apostles; he died there a few days after receiving Christian baptism. Ina of Wessex and his Queen Ethelburga followed Cadwalla's example and ended their days in the Eternal City; and, writes Bede, "in these times numbers of English, nobles and members of the humbler classes, laity, clergy, men and women vied with each other in journeying to the *limina Apostolorum*, desiring to pass their earthly pilgrimage near the holy places so as to deserve to be received more lovingly by the Saints in Heaven." The convents and monasteries established in England became centres of learning and civilisation, and in the shelter of their walls were cultivated all the arts of peace. Sculpture,

church building and decoration, painting, embroidery, and above all the art of multiplying manuscripts and of writing books to which we who live to-day are indebted for the preservation of ancient learning, all formed part of the work done in God's cause for civilisation and progress in the monastic retreats which our Anglo-Saxon ancestors loved to build to the honour of His name. From Italy and Gaul, and especially from Rome, pilgrims to the shrines of the Saints brought back precious volumes of classical and Christian literature. Wilfrid and Benet Biscop, Theodore and Hadrian, with Ethelbert of York and Alcuin, are all of them national benefactors in this regard. Even to-day the influence of the literary treasures they collected with such labour and preserved with such care may be traced in our own civilisation.

No feature of the wonderful Anglo-Saxon Church, however, is perhaps more remarkable than its devotion to Rome and the tombs of the Apostles. The churches of England were often constructed after the model of the Roman basilicas; and frequently in the books written during this period in England may be seen noted the exact measurements of the great church of St. Peter and other Roman sanctuaries. It was to Rome that the steps of pilgrims were turned in numbers that now seem almost impossible. St. Benet Biscop, for instance, went five times to the Eternal City, St. Wilfrid three times or more, in spite of the dangers and difficulties of the road and, in those days, the terrors of the Alpine passes during the winter snows. The correspondence of St. Boniface alone proves that in the eighth century the roads to the Eternal City were well nigh as frequented by Anglo-Saxon pilgrims of every class and degree as they are to-day.

Of the religious beliefs and practices and devotions of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers it is perhaps hardly necessary to speak. They were essentially what ours are to-day. Their belief in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, as the centre of Christian life and the supreme act of Christian worship, is evidenced by their churches and their altars and vestments. Numerous altars were erected in every one of the larger churches: the Mass was always said in Latin, and it was offered for the living and the dead. The Saxon Catholics received the Blessed Sacrament in the Mass under both kinds, but out of Mass, as we do to-day, in one kind, believing that under the form of bread after Con-

secration there was ever really and substantially present the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of our Saviour Jesus Christ. No belief is so clearly manifested in Saxon times as that of Purgatory. Our Saxon forefathers followed many religious customs and devotional practices founded upon this doctrine: the dying, for example, asked to be prayed for, the living offered up prayers for the dead and joined in pious associations with that object. Monasteries and churches were built where perpetual remembrances in the daily prayers might be made for the departed friends and relations of the founder and the Sacrifice of the Mass offered for their souls. The reverence paid to the consecrated churchyard, which was called "God's acre," was due to the lively faith of the Saxon Christians in their certain belief in the Resurrection of the Dead at the day of the great "doom." Of the devotion of these simple people to the Angels and Saints there can be no manner of doubt. They prayed for their intercession and invoked their aid. They loved to depict them in their paintings and carvings, and in the case of the Saints to reverence their relics and recall the memory of their life of service in this world as an encouragement to them to tread in their footsteps. Above every other English devotion of that time in its intensity and universality which the Anglo-Saxon people enthusiastically adopted, next to their worship of the Redeemer, was the veneration of the Virgin Mother of God. It is impossible to doubt its genuine reality; impossible to exaggerate the intensity and childlike confidence with which Catholic England in Saxon times invoked our Lady and had recourse with lively faith to her patronage. In a word, turn where we will in all the memorials of the religious life, literary or artistic, that have come down to us, the word "Catholic" is written plainly and indelibly upon every record. Even to understand their language fully and to interpret their meaning truly the student must first learn his lesson in the Catholic Church of to-day.

Unfortunately the glorious religious condition of England during the eighth century did not continue. The Church, like the country, had its troubles and difficulties and its time of obscurity. During the first three-quarters of the ninth century both the one and the other had to pass through a long period of storm and strife. The Vikings from Denmark and the north began to gather on the shores of this island, and gradually the cloud of their depredations spread till

almost the whole country was shrouded in darkness and desolation. Churches, monasteries, and convents were cast down into the dust, and heaps of smoking ruins marked the paths of the pagan invaders. Bishops and priests, monks and nuns, besides the Christian people, fell victims to the hatred and lust of the Northern pirates in such numbers, that it must have seemed in those days as if Providence had destined the land to return once more to paganism. When all seemed blackest and religion and learning had apparently sunk to the lowest ebb, God raised up men to effect a regeneration. In regard to the Church, about which alone we are here concerned, first and foremost must undoubtedly be named Dunstan of Glastonbury. What he did for England and the restoration of religious and ecclesiastical life can never now be known, though it was well understood at the time and recognised for generations after in the universal reverence paid to his name. He found State and Church materially and morally in ruins, he left it prosperous and organised. As monk and statesman and archbishop his indomitable energy and his extraordinary capacities were devoted to the work of restoring the Church of the English to its ancient glory and at the same time consolidating the power of the nation. He was assisted in his work by other great men whose names ought to be remembered with gratitude by all Englishmen. Such are St. Ethelwold and St. Oswald, not to name King Edgar, who in every way seconded their efforts for religion and civilisation.

The labours of St. Dunstan worked wonders, not merely during his lifetime and for the restoration of the monastic system, but for the general regeneration of ecclesiastical life. The impetus given, by his unbounded energy, continued long after he had gone to his reward. The minsters and churches destroyed by the Danes were everywhere restored, and the means of again practising the Christian life and taking part in the Christian worship were afforded to the people. The new life was manifested by fresh missionary enterprises, and efforts were made to impart religious instruction everywhere to the people. For example, in the Canons of Edgar, which may certainly be attributed to Dunstan, the parochial clergy are enjoined to preach to their flocks every Sunday, whilst the same duty was urged upon them by Aelfric, who likewise furnished them, in his Book of Homilies, with material for their homely discourses.

Besides this legislation as to instruction, what are known as the Canons of Aelfric (A.D. 970), afford us a good deal of insight into the religious practices of the Saxon Church. The celibacy of the clergy was strictly enjoined. The four minor and three major Orders were in existence, and they had to be given by the bishop, who was likewise to confirm children and consecrate churches with holy unction. The priest was to offer up the Holy Sacrifice in these consecrated churches only, and the sacred vestments for Mass and the cloths for the altars are specially legislated for. The priests and other sacred ministers were bound to the daily recitation of the Divine Office in its sevenfold division. The Sacraments were to be administered to the faithful without fee or charge, and Holy Viaticum, Extreme Unction, and Confession, are particularly mentioned. Finally, to name one more point: the tithes of the faithful were to be divided into three portions—one for the maintenance of the Church, another for the poor, and the third for the support of the priest. All this is confirmed and strengthened by the "Laws" of A.D. 994, which speak of the care that must be taken to have the bread and wine for the Eucharist spotless in their cleanness, and also order water to be mingled with the wine at the Sacrifice. These laws too, bade people pray to the Saints, and in particular to Our Blessed Lady, and to make frequent use of the Sign of the Cross; to observe Lent in its fasting and abstinence; to go to Confession at least once in the year, and to Holy Communion each Sunday during Lent, and frequently at other times in the year; but always with careful preparation, remembering that it is "the Communion of the Body and Blood of the Lord."

After St. Dunstan's death, a third Danish invasion afflicted the country and the Church. A cowardly massacre of the Danes on St. Brice's day, A.D. 1002, brought the Northmen over in such numbers that they ultimately set up their own sovereign in England. From A.D. 1016 to 1042 a Danish dynasty, in the person of Canute and his two sons, ruled the country with a rod of iron, and the people were glad to welcome back a king of the Saxon line in the person of Edward the Confessor. He was virtuous and gentle; but neither wise nor strong in his government of the country. Still, under him there were twenty-four years of peace, and although his foreign education made him lean upon foreign advisers and appoint them

to place and position in Church and State, the people certainly in after years looked back to his reign as to a time of happiness; when under the iron rule of their Norman masters, they frequently sighed for "the laws of good King Edward." For his Christian virtues St. Edward was canonised by popular acclamation, and his shrine at Westminster quickly became the centre of national devotion.

PART II

FROM A.D. 1066 TO THE REFORMATION

V

THE CHURCH UNDER THE NORMAN KINGS

William the Conqueror successfully asserted his claim to the English crown at the Battle of Hastings in A.D. 1066. The modern idea of national Churches being then wholly unknown, the conquest of England made of course no change in the religion of the country. By skilful misrepresentation William had indeed won over the Pope to his side, and had invested his expedition with something of the glamour of a holy war undertaken for religion.

In behalf of the Norman contention it had been urged at Rome that Harold had broken his oath, and was thus a public perjurer to be punished by authority, and probably also, that Stigand, who then occupied the Chair of Canterbury, had supported Benedict, the anti-Pope. For these and other reasons Alexander II. was induced to give his blessing to the invasion, and even to consecrate a banner to be unfurled when the Norman army set foot in England. The religious aspect of the undertaking was further suggested in a vow made by the Conqueror to build an abbey on the site of his victory; and Battle Abbey to-day records the fulfilment of his promise.

Although the Conquest made no difference in religion it caused a considerable displacement of the bishops and other ecclesiastics

who then ruled the Church in England. No sooner had William I. made his position secure than at his request the Pope sent over two Cardinal legates to preside at a Council and deal with some pressing ecclesiastical business. They arrived early in A.D. 1070, and convoked a Synod at Winchester for the Eastertide of that year. Writing to summon St. Wulstan, Bishop of Worcester, to attend the meeting the legates say that they are holding it "in behalf of the Lord Pope," since to "the Roman Church belongs the duty" of watching "over all Christians." St. Wulstan attended and put in his claim for the restoration of certain property belonging to his See. The main business of the meeting, however, related to the case of Archbishop Stigand, against whom certain canonical offences were charged. The Legates, at the end of the inquiry, deposed him from his office and declared the metropolitical See of Canterbury vacant. On leaving England at the conclusion of their business, the Cardinals took with them to Rome the "pence of St. Peter," which had been collected and "which of right belonged to the Apostolic purse."

The case of Stigand was but the first of a long series of deprivations of the Saxon prelates. Step by step the Conqueror got rid of most of the English bishops. St. Wulstan of Worcester, if legend speaks truly, was saved from expulsion only by a manifestation of supernatural protection. In the same way the abbots of many monasteries and other high ecclesiastical officials were made to resign, or otherwise disposed of, that room might be made for Normans.

William I. obtained from the Pope the appointment of the great and devout Lanfranc, one of the most learned ecclesiastics then living, as Archbishop of Canterbury. He had long been the adviser of the Conqueror as Abbot of Bec in Normandy, and twenty years before his elevation to the See of Canterbury he had defended the Catholic doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament against Berengar of Tours at a Council in Rome (A.D. 1050). He there with incomparable learning maintained that by the ministry of the priest the Divine Power changed the substance of the bread into the substance of Our Lord's Body, the accidents, or qualities, still remaining. In the controversy which followed Lanfranc became recognised as the Catholic champion, and defended the orthodox teaching in several

Councils, besides composing a book upon the subject of Transubstantiation.

After first refusing the offer of the Archbishopric of Canterbury, Lanfranc yielded under pressure as a matter of duty, and coming over to England was consecrated by the Bishop of London in the presence of eight other bishops, on August 29, A.D. 1070. His policy as primate undoubtedly tended to exalt the Church in this country. One most important and obvious effect of the Conquest was to bring the English Church into still closer connection with the Church on the Continent; another was to separate the ecclesiastical from the civil law, to remove the clerical subjects of the king from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts of justice and make them subject to their own ecclesiastical tribunals. All this Lanfranc effected during his episcopate.

Almost immediately after his own consecration the Archbishop was called upon to consecrate Thomas of Bayeux to the See of York. The Archbishop refused to impose hands upon him unless Thomas would acknowledge the obedience of York to Canterbury. After some delay, the question was deferred to a suitable occasion and Lanfranc bestowed the episcopal consecration on this condition. In A.D. 1071 both Archbishops went to Rome to obtain their palliums, and Lanfranc was received with special affection by Alexander II. as his old master. The case at issue between the two Archbishops was argued before the Pope, and in the course of the Archbishop of Canterbury's speech, he took occasion to profess his belief in the Divine commission to rule the Church bestowed upon the Roman Pontiffs in the person of St. Peter. "Of truth," he said, "it is engrained in the consciences of all Christians (that Christ) gave nothing less to his successors than He gave to St. Peter. Hence a dispensation in all ecclesiastical matters is only valid if it has been approved by the judgment of the successors of St. Peter."

In a letter also, written at a subsequent date to Pope Gregory VII., Lanfranc addresses him as "the revered supreme pastor of the universal Church," and declares that he "certainly does not question, and does not think any one questions," that it was "by the authority of the Apostolic See" that he was raised to the dignity of Archbishop of Canterbury.

During his tenure of office Archbishop Lanfranc had frequent recourse to Synods to regulate the affairs of the Church, and to improve the somewhat chaotic condition in which the rapidity of the Conquest, and the systematic substitution of foreign ecclesiastics for the native clergy, had naturally left it. As a monk himself, he dealt especially with the monasteries, which apparently were the centres of the old national feeling; and besides drawing up a set of excellent and minute Constitutions to regulate Benedictine observance, in numerous cases he replaced the English superiors by abbots brought from beyond the seas. The English chronicler, on account of his labours to improve monastic discipline, calls him "the father and lover of monks." Although he necessarily placed foreigners in all ecclesiastical positions, to further the policy of the Conqueror in the settlement of the country, he quickly assumed the position of an Englishman, writing of "we English" and "our island." He outlived William I. and, although reluctantly, crowned William Rufus at Canterbury on December 26, A.D. 1087. In the rebellion of Odo Bishop of Bayeux and the Norman lords, the following year, Lanfranc and his suffragans generally stood by the new King. In November, A.D. 1088, after the rebellion was stamped out, Lanfranc attended the King's court at Salisbury for the trial of William de Saint Calais, Bishop of Durham, who endeavoured to shelter himself from condemnation under his spiritual character. In the course of the proceedings the Archbishop drew a clear distinction between the spiritual position of a bishop and his position as holding temporalities from the King in his capacity of a Baron, and he implied that the bishop stood there to be tried not as a bishop, but as one of the King's tenants-in-chief, and that the bishops, who with others were trying him, were not doing so as bishops, but as members of the King's Court.

Lanfranc died on May 24, 1089. He had been seized by a fever at Canterbury, and his physicians ordered him to take a draught of medicine; out of reverence he delayed doing so until after he had received the Blessed Sacrament, and this is said to have hastened his end. The Archbishop had spent the revenues of his See with great munificence. The cathedral church of Canterbury had been burned in A.D. 1067, and, in seven years from his elevation to the Archbishopric, Lanfranc had rebuilt it in the Norman style. It was

cruciform, with two great western towers and a central lantern. The nave had eight bays, the roof was pointed, and the church was furnished with a profusion of sacred vestments—all his gift. His example, and in many instances his generosity, caused the erection, in this and the two following reigns, of numerous majestic churches, some of which to this day stand as monuments of the lofty ideas of their builders, and of the faith of men who would raise such temples, and who thought nothing too good for the place where the Christian Sacrifice of the Mass was to be offered to God with due reverence and solemnity. Many of these churches, of course, have perished, but those that remain are sufficient to speak of their departed glory. Such, for example, are St. Albans, the nave and transept of Ely, portions of Carlisle Cathedral, the great naves of Durham, Gloucester, Peterborough, Norwich, Tewkesbury Abbey and Waltham Cross.

During the episcopate of Lanfranc some slight difficulty arose between the King and the Roman officials as to the punctual payment of Peter's pence. This annual donation had been made from the days of King Ina, and before the year A.D. 1000 the Popes had agreed upon the manner of collection, and a definitely apportioned sum had been settled for each diocese to contribute. It is clear, however, that only about one-third of the actual contributions made by the English people ever found their way to Rome. In A.D. 1074, Pope Gregory VII. in a letter to King William invited him to see to the punctual payment of this donation, and tells him "he will find St. Peter a loving and not unmindful debtor." Two years later, apparently, the money had still not been paid, for the Pope, in A.D. 1076, sent his legate Hubert to the King to ask for more exact payment, and further to suggest that as he, the Conqueror, had in some measure obtained his kingdom through the Pope, he should take an oath of fealty to him in temporal matters, as a vassal to his over-lord, like the heads of some other States who had entered into this relation with the Holy See. To the second request the King returned a categorical refusal, saying that he owed no fealty in temporals to the Pope, but he promised to see to the Peter's pence. The delay had been caused, he said, by his own absence from England, when the money had been negligently collected. Some portion of the arrears then due was sent at once by the hands of the legate,

and William undertook that Archbishop Lanfranc should faithfully transmit the rest, as soon as it could be obtained from the collectors.

When Lanfranc died in A.D. 1089 William Rufus began to show himself in his true character. He kept the See of Canterbury vacant for more than three years that he might himself enjoy the revenues with which it was endowed. Other bishops and abbots died, and he took possession of the lands and endowments of those Sees and monasteries for the same purpose. It was only after he became seriously ill that he consented to allow the vacant prelacies to be filled. For Canterbury the name of the saintly and illustrious St. Anselm, Lanfranc's successor as Abbot of Bec, was suggested and met with general approval. The King consented, and sent for him to England. Anselm complied, but repeatedly refused the proffered honour, and only upon great importunity at last gave way and was consecrated at Canterbury on December 4, A.D. 1093.

From the outset of Anselm's episcopate there were ever-increasing difficulties and quarrels with the King, who had now recovered his health and repented of his previous repentance. Matters became more serious at the end of the first year, when Anselm proposed to proceed to Rome to receive his pallium from the Pope "according," as he said, "to the custom of my predecessors." William demanded to whom he was going, as at that time there was an anti-Pope; and upon Anselm's reply that he acknowledged only Pope Urban, the King declared that he had himself not yet determined who was the rightful claimant to the papacy, and would permit no one to anticipate his decision, or acknowledge any Pope without his leave. In common with the whole Norman Church, St. Anselm before coming to England had already been in communion with Pope Urban, and he consequently declared that "it would be a grave matter to have to deny the Vicar of St. Peter, and a grave thing to have to break the oath of fidelity made to the King." In this dilemma a Council was called in March, A.D. 1095, and the opinion of the bishops was asked by the Archbishop, as to his duty under the circumstances. The suffragans were unwilling to commit themselves to any policy which might involve them in difficulties with the King, and refused to give any advice

at all. St. Anselm thereupon told them that he intended to act according to his conscience. "I will betake myself to the Chief Shepherd and Head of all, to the Angel of the great Council, and will follow the advice which I shall receive from Him in my cause, yea rather in His cause and that of His Church. In the things which are God's I will give obedience to the Vicar of the Blessed Peter, and in things touching the earthly dignity of my lord the King, I will, to the best of my ability, give him my faithful counsel and help." As the matter proceeded the position and the issue became absolutely clear, and St. Anselm refused "to renounce his obedience to the sovereign pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church," at the bidding of the King, as William desired that he should. This was a matter for the Church to decide, he said, and not for the State; and in taking this attitude he protested that he did not in any way violate his allegiance to his earthly sovereign. The nobles appear to have seen the point at issue even more clearly than did the bishops, and in reply to William's demand that they should have nothing to do with Anselm, they said, "He is our Archbishop; to him pertains the rule of Christianity in this land, and in this respect we cannot, whilst we live here as Christians, refuse his guidance."

The question dragged on for some time without definite settlement. Meanwhile William had devised a scheme for getting rid of Anselm. He despatched his envoys to Rome, who in his name and that of England acknowledged Urban as rightful Pope. They then persuaded the Pontiff, as they thought, to send the pallium for the Archbishop, to the King. It was not, however, given into their hands, but Cardinal Walter, Bishop of Albano, came with the messengers, in order to bring the sacred insignia of the archiepiscopal office to England with due honour. On landing, the Cardinal was hurried by the King's officials to London. He was not allowed to tarry at Canterbury, or even to speak to St. Anselm, before he had been interviewed by the King, who had been encouraged by reports from his envoys to hope that his design had succeeded. The acknowledgment of Urban as Pope was now ordered by the King to be made throughout the kingdom, and he then broached his design, asking the legate to declare St. Anselm deposed from his office, and promising a large annual subsidy to the Pope if this were granted. The Cardinal,

of course, flatly refused the royal request. Rufus saw that he was foiled, and at once, making a virtue of necessity, consented to at least an outward show of reconciliation. Anselm was now importuned by the King's friends to propitiate William by a present of money and by declaring his willingness to receive his pallium from the hands of his sovereign. He refused to do either, and the King had to content himself as best he might. On Sunday, June 10, A.D. 1095, the legate brought the pallium in a silver casket to Canterbury, where he was met near the Cathedral by St. Anselm barefooted, but vested in full pontificals and attended by his suffragans. The sacred pledge of his archiepiscopal jurisdiction, "from the body of St. Peter," was laid upon the altar from which it was taken by the Archbishop himself.

It was in this same year, A.D. 1095, that the series of great expeditions for the recovery of the Holy Land, known as the Crusades, was initiated by the Pope. At Clermont on November 18, Urban himself preached on the utility and necessity of this movement. The hearts of Christians were stirred with a desire to take part in the glorious work, which the Pope declared a religious obligation on all. Robert of Normandy, in order to do his part, mortgaged his dominions to his brother William Rufus, who to raise the money demanded it of the English clergy. They in turn were obliged to pledge or to sell many of the most precious and sacred treasures of their churches.

Two years passed, and the truce between the King and the Archbishop remained outwardly undisturbed. They were not, however, altogether years of peace for St. Anselm, because he saw many things amiss in the state of the Church in England, which demanded reform and claimed his attention as Archbishop. The King would listen to no admonition nor would he afford his help, and so Anselm was powerless. At length he saw that the only chance lay in an appeal to the Pope, and he demanded the King's leave to go to Rome. This was curtly refused. He was, moreover, asked to promise never to appeal to the Pope, and was told that should he venture to leave England, the King would never again look on him as Archbishop, and would at once take possession of the property of his See. Anselm had made up his mind as to his

duty, and did not waver. His reply was to the point: "You wish me to swear never on any account to appeal in England to Blessed Peter or his Vicar. This, I say, ought not to be the command of you who are a Christian, for to swear this is to abjure Blessed Peter. He who abjures Blessed Peter undoubtedly abjures Christ, who made him prince over His Church." This was at the beginning of October, A.D. 1097, and by the end of the month the Archbishop was on his way to Rome.

St. Anselm was received in the Eternal City with every demonstration of affection by Pope Urban and the Roman Court. He devoted much time in his enforced idleness to his old studies, and he composed whilst in exile his celebrated treatise on the Incarnation—"*Cur Deus homo?*" He attended several meetings and Councils in the Eternal City, at which the great reputation he had for learning, and his sufferings and exile for his duty, gained him an honourable place and hearing. Nothing, however, was done in the cause of his appeals except the Pope's proposed excommunication of William Rufus, which is said to have been hindered at the Archbishop's own intercession. In July, A.D. 1099, Pope Urban died; and on August 2, A.D. 1100, William himself fell in the New Forest, killed by an arrow from an unknown hand. At the invitation of the new King, Henry I., Anselm returned at once to England, which he reached on September 23, A.D. 1100. He was received by the King with every demonstration of affection, but he was at once confronted with fresh difficulties. Henry wished him to do homage for the restitution of the temporalities of the See of Canterbury, which had now for three years been in the royal hands. Anselm was pledged to the decrees of the recent Councils at Bari and Rome, which forbade ecclesiastics to receive investiture from laymen, or to do homage for their benefices. Henry was unwilling to surrender the old customs of the kingdom, and St. Anselm, although he does not seem to have had much real objection to the customs in question, was bound by his obedience to the Holy See. The matter remained unsettled for some considerable time. Envoys were despatched to the Pope to endeavour to get some relaxation of the decrees, but in regard to the investiture of prelates with ring and staff, the Holy See was rightly inflexible, although for a time a false report as to the Pope's willingness to concede this

was believed, even by St. Anselm. Finally the matter of homage was decided in favour of the King by Pope Paschal, and on August 1, A.D. 1107, in a large assembly held in London, Henry in his turn gave way upon the matter of investiture, and it was decreed that henceforth the ring and staff, symbols of spiritual jurisdiction, should be bestowed only by spiritual authority, but that for the bestowal of temporalities ecclesiastics should do homage to their sovereign as temporal lord. Two years later St. Anselm's troubles were ended. He died at Canterbury, April 21, 1109. For five years after this Henry I. kept the See of Canterbury vacant, and it was not till May 17, A.D. 1114, that a successor was appointed in the person of Ralph d'Escures. He concerned himself greatly with maintaining the dignity of the Archbishopric of Canterbury, and he wrote a long letter to Pope Calixtus on the subject, addressing him as "his Right Reverend and only Lord, supreme Pontiff of the Universal, Holy, and Apostolic Church of Rome."

During the troubles of St. Anselm's episcopate it had been difficult to pay much attention to the discipline of the Church. After his return in A.D. 1100, however, there was vigorous legislation as to the suppression of married clergy with a view to stamping out that abuse of the ecclesiastical canons. In A.D. 1138 Albericus, Bishop of Ostia, and legate of Pope Innocent II., held a Synod at Westminster, and the provisions of the meeting are of interest, as manifesting the Catholic practices in use. For example, we have evidence of the use of the holy oil of Chrism, and of Baptismal oil, of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, of the Sacrament of Penance, of the Holy Mass, of Holy Communion. There is legislation for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament and for the reverence with which it was to be carried to the sick; for the erection of private oratories; for the consecration of bishops, the blessing of abbots, and for the reception of the Sacrament of Orders; for the reservation of cases for absolution to the Roman Pontiff, &c.

When this Synod was held the Archbishopric of Canterbury was vacant, but the following year, A.D. 1139, for the third time an Abbot of Bec was chosen to the See in the person of Theobald. All during the reign of Stephen the Church, like the nation, had experienced the utmost depth of misery. Towards both the King acted as a despot; and he was only restrained by his wars from indulging in all

he tastes of a tyrant. It was now that under Archbishop Theobald's guidance the Church saved the nation. "England," says Green on Stephen's reign, "was rescued from this chaos by the efforts of the Church."

VI

THE CHURCH DURING THE PLANTAGENET RULE

When Stephen died in 1154 Archbishop Theobald and others were sent to Henry Plantagenet, then in Normandy, to request him to take the crown. Henry was the grandson of Henry I., being the son of his daughter Matilda and Geoffrey of Anjou. On December 19, A.D. 1154, he arrived in England and was at once "unanimously elected king, and anointed" by the Archbishop.

At first the dispositions of Henry II. towards the Church appear to have been all that could be desired, and in these peaceful years it was given a brief period for reorganisation, which was not unnecessary after the turbulent reign of Stephen. Soon, however, there were signs of difficulties between Church and State, and under Archbishop Theobald's successor these came to a climax in the great quarrel in regard to the limits of the royal and ecclesiastical jurisdictions. In A.D. 1157 the point was raised in a somewhat curious way. The Abbot of Battle claimed to be exempt from the jurisdiction of his Ordinary, the Bishop of Chichester, and based his claim upon the grant of William the Conqueror at the foundation of the Abbey. This exemption had been admitted as valid by previous holders of the See of Chichester; but was now denied by Bishop Hilary. Into the details of the case it is unnecessary to enter: the interesting point was raised by the bishop in a meeting held at Chichester in A.D. 1157 to settle the question. The King, Archbishop Theobald and the other bishops, as well as many of the nobles, were present, when the Bishop of Chichester stated what he held to be Catholic teaching as to the jurisdiction of the Church and its extent.

In the course of a long speech he pointed out that "Our Lord left

two powers in the world, the spiritual and the material." The spiritual He conferred "on the first pastor, that is, on St. Peter the Apostle, and all his disciples and successors." Hence from the beginning "the custom was implanted in the Church of God that the pastors of the holy church of the said Saint Peter, Prince of the Apostles, should rightly govern, as being vicars of the holy Church of God." Hence also "the Roman Church, endowed by the apostleship of the said Prince of the Apostles, throughout the length and breadth of the world had obtained so high and great a dignity as chief, so that no ecclesiastic can be deposed without his judgment and authority." Further that "in this way the Church was constituted from the earliest time that" without the permission or confirmation of the said Father (the Pope) it is not lawful for any "lay person, not even a king, to bestow ecclesiastical dignities, or grant ecclesiastical privileges to churches."

In the event, the bishop was compelled to withdraw his claim. Curiously enough, however, one of those who appear to have been against him in his contention, and who was present at the meeting at Chichester, was the King's chancellor, Thomas Becket, who subsequently as Archbishop was compelled to raise much the same question, and even to sacrifice his life in the quarrel. Archbishop Theobald died in April, A.D. 1161, "hoping and praying" that Thomas the Chancellor would succeed him at Canterbury. The See remained vacant for nearly a year, and Becket was unwilling to accept the office to which Henry II. had designated him, avowedly because he foresaw that the King's ecclesiastical policy would inevitably clash with his own obvious duty to the Church as Archbishop. The King, however, insisted; the Canterbury monks elected him, and he was consecrated by Henry de Blois, Bishop of Winchester, on June 3, A.D. 1162, having been ordained priest the previous day. At the King's request Thomas was allowed by the Pope to send for his pallium, instead of going to Rome in person to fetch it. Although the life of the new Archbishop had always been pious and pure, his consecration at once worked a great change in him. He became forthwith most zealously devout and studious, adopted an austere and penitential mode of life, and threw himself into the work of his ecclesiastical office with that ardour which had characterised all his service of the King.

His fears, that his duty to conscience would interfere with his friendship to Henry, became quickly realised. Within a year from his appointment he had felt it incumbent upon him to oppose a proposition made by Henry on a mere matter of State administration, but on the ground that it was inconsistent with the plain principles of justice. This was the beginning; the royal irritation was increased by St. Thomas' persistent efforts to recover all alienated property of his See, even that which was in the possession of the Crown.

The main contest, however, was upon a very simple issue. William the Conqueror's ecclesiastical courts had been set up for the distinct purpose of withdrawing clerics from the ordinary or civil courts. Henry saw in this a limitation of the royal power, and in the course of A.D. 1163 he made several attempts through his justiciars to assert his royal jurisdiction over clerks accused of crime. In each of these attempts he was defeated by the legal objections interposed by St. Thomas. The position of the Archbishop was clear; consistently with his duty he could not allow the clergy to be deprived of a privilege which had been conceded for a century. He could not surrender the right, for to do so would place the Church again under the domination of the secular power, from which Popes and bishops had persistently striven to emancipate it.

Henry made the first move in the struggle. On October 1, A.D. 1163, he summoned the bishops into his presence. He bade them sign their approval of "his grandfather's customs," and in particular of two articles, which dealt with the respective functions of Church and State, in the case of clerks accused of crime. The bishops agreed to do what Henry demanded of them, with the covering clause "saving our order"; but the Archbishop absolutely refused to agree to the two clauses, to which the King particularly desired his assent.

Reprisals followed; nor were matters improved by a personal interview with the King at Northampton. In December, however, it was intimated to Becket, falsely as it afterwards appeared, that the Pope wished him to give way to Henry, who on his part would really be content with the appearance of victory. Upon this the Archbishop privately agreed to abide by "the customs of the realm" loyally and in good faith. When, however, he was required to repeat this publicly, at a Council summoned for the purpose at Clarendon, on January 13, A.D. 1164, he had found out that he had been deceived;

the Pope had expressed no such desire. He consequently not only refused to sign the sixteen propositions, known as the *Constitutions of Clarendon*, declaring them all to be contrary to the law of the Church; but, in his penitence at having given way even so far as he had done, though it had been in error, he abstained from saying Mass until he had obtained absolution from the Pope. Some unsuccessful negotiations followed, and St. Thomas made two attempts to leave the country.

In October the same year, at a Council held at Northampton, on some trumped-up charges, St. Thomas was declared guilty of high treason. The bishops, though they would not support him in his hour of need, refused to take part in this sentence against him. That night Thomas fled from Northampton, escaped over the sea to France, and went at once to throw himself at the feet of Pope Alexander III., who was then at Sens. The Pontiff naturally upheld Becket in his refusal to sign away the liberties of the Church; but his decision did not, of course, end the quarrel. Six years of fruitless negotiations followed. St. Thomas spent these in exile, and more than once during that time, it almost seemed as if, to avoid the schism into which Henry appeared to be dragging the Church in England, Pope Alexander would give way, and compromise the cause for which the Archbishop was contending.

During this time St. Thomas, in writing to one of the English bishops, states quite clearly what the Catholic teaching then was about obedience to the Roman See. "Who doubts," he writes, "that the Roman Church is the head of all the Churches and the source of Christian doctrine? Who is ignorant that to Peter were given the keys of the kingdom of heaven? In the faith and teaching of Peter doth not the structure of the whole Church rise until we all attain in Christ unto the perfect man, unto the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God? . . . Whosoever he be who waters or who plants, God giveth to no one increase save to him who shall plant in the faith of Peter and acquiesce in his teaching."

In A.D. 1170, mainly by the influence of Louis VII. of France, a reconciliation between the King and the Archbishop was effected. The Pope urged St. Thomas to return as quickly as possible to his diocese, which had been so long without a pastor. This he did at once, and he was received by the people with every manifestation of

joy. His entry into his cathedral city of Canterbury was like a triumphal procession. The King's good dispositions were, however, of brief duration. His mind was poisoned against the Archbishop, and a hasty expression he allowed to drop from his lips sealed St. Thomas's fate. In less than a month from the Archbishop's landing in England, on December 29, A.D. 1170, he had received the martyr's crown at the altar of St. Benedict, in his own cathedral.

So wonderful were the miracles which immediately attested the sanctity of the martyred Archbishop, that even before the election of his successor, he had been canonised. At once he became the patron of the English Church, which for the next three centuries looked upon him as her pride and glory, and as the champion of her liberties. The whole Christian world enriched his tomb at Canterbury with their offerings, till it became, even for its very magnificence, one of the great sights of the Western world. Before the martyr's shrine King Henry did public penance, and in A.D. 1172 was absolved by the Pope for his part in the tragedy. The Saint, even by his death, had won the battle. The *Constitutions of Clarendon* became a dead letter, and as long as England remained Catholic, ecclesiastics preserved the liberties for which St. Thomas had fought the good fight even unto death.

The remainder of the reign of Henry II. and that of King Richard I. call for little remark, so far as the story of the Church in England is concerned. Archbishop Richard, who succeeded St. Thomas, was apparently a wise and prudent ruler. Very shortly after his accession in A.D. 1175 he celebrated a Provincial Synod at Westminster, in which stringent provisions were enacted to secure the better observance of the laws of clerical celibacy. Clerics in Minor Orders who had taken to themselves wives were to be prohibited from ever holding any benefice; subdeacons, deacons and priests were to be ordered to separate from the women they called their wives under grave penalties, since by the Canons of the Church they were incapable of marriage. The following year, A.D. 1176, at the request of King Henry II., the Pope sent Cardinal Hugo as his legate into England to settle various matters of business. As papal legate the Cardinal summoned a Synod of both Provinces to meet him at Westminster. At this meeting he presided in the Pope's name, and endeavoured,

but with little success, to settle the long-standing quarrel, between the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, as to precedence.

In the reign of King Richard, the Third Crusade, in which he joined, had its effect upon the Church of this country. To obtain the necessary funds for the expedition, and subsequently for the King's ransom, the taxation of ecclesiastics was increased to such an extent that the sacred plate had to be pledged or sold. From A.D. 1193 until A.D. 1205 the Church of Canterbury was ruled by Hubert Walter, who had previously been Bishop of Salisbury. Besides being a great ecclesiastic, Archbishop Walter was one of the most eminent of the many great Churchmen who all during this period had the administration of English State affairs in their hands. Though their ecclesiastical duties must undoubtedly have somewhat suffered by their secular occupations, they not only secured some measure of justice and safety to the people in what would otherwise have been lawless times, but they contributed greatly as statesmen to the making of England.

Archbishop Hubert Walter was a man of more than ordinary energy. In A.D. 1195 he was in the north of England making a visitation of the monasteries and of the Northern Province generally as "legate of the Pope." He legislated in a Synod held at York on matters concerning clerical life, being careful to declare that "in everything he desired to safeguard the authority and dignity of the most Holy Roman See." The provisions of this Synod are of great interest as manifesting the extreme care and reverence which the English Church had for the Blessed Sacrament. The law of the Church as to the mixed chalice; the care taken to preserve the Canon of the "Sacrifice of the Mass" from even verbal changes, however slight; provisions as to the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, which out of reverence was to be changed each week; the honour with which it was to be carried to the sick for their Viaticum, &c., are all summed up by Archbishop Hubert in the words: "Let the Blessed Sacrament be consecrated with humility, received with fear, and dispensed (to the faithful) with all reverence." A similar Synod was held in London in A.D. 1200 by the same Archbishop, in which the legislation as to the Eucharist and the other Sacraments, as well as to the Divine Office to be said by priests, is equally clear and edifying. It is useful to see by this that, even in the general chaos of King

John's reign, the Church authorities did not relax their efforts to maintain a proper standard of discipline.

The name of one great bishop and saint should be mentioned as having lived at this time—that of St. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln. The influence of his upright character and devout life was felt by the nation at a time when such an example was much needed. He was fearless in doing his duty. When Henry II. desired him to bestow a prebend at Lincoln on one whom the bishop considered unworthy, he flatly refused the royal request. He successfully withstood King Richard, in what he considered an unjust taxation proposed to be levied on the people. When he died, on November 24, A.D. 1200, he was borne in what was really a procession of triumph to his tomb in Lincoln Cathedral, King John himself being one of the bearers of the bier.

The reign of John brought great trouble to the Church in England. Hubert Walter, the Archbishop of Canterbury, died in A.D. 1205 and grave difficulties arose about the choice of a successor. The monks first elected their sub-prior, and then a nominee of the King. Pope Innocent III. rejected both candidates and bade the monks choose Stephen Langton, an Englishman and at that time a Cardinal in Rome, one of the best, most learned and upright ecclesiastics of the day. This they did at once and in Rome, without referring to the King for leave to elect as was customary, and thereupon the Pope immediately consecrated him on June 17, A.D. 1207. King John was furious and declared that he would never receive Langton as Archbishop, or allow him to set foot in England. In this disposition he remained for several years. The country meanwhile experienced all the horrors of an Interdict. John himself was excommunicated by the Pope; was declared deposed from his rule over the kingdom and the King of France was invited to carry out the sentence. At the last moment, however, John submitted himself fully and entirely to the Pope. In July, A.D. 1213, in the presence of a papal legate, he surrendered his kingdom into the Pope's hands and received his crown again from the Pope's representative as a vassal from his suzerain lord. He further bound himself and his successors by oath to hold England as a fief of the Roman See and to pay a yearly tribute to the papacy for his kingdom.

It was not till this had been done that Cardinal Langton at last

came over to England and took possession of his See, six years after his election. He at once became the leader of the nobles and people in their fight for freedom against the tyranny and lawlessness of John, who broke every promise and violated every oath. At length, guided by Langton, the Barons forced him, in A.D. 1215, to grant the Great Charter. This, however, was not to be the end of the struggle. John appealed to the Pope against his subjects; and the Pope, on the ground that as suzerain he ought to have been consulted before his vassal could be bound by any oath respecting the government of the kingdom, declared *Magna Charta* null and void. The country now experienced all the horrors of civil war. The Barons invited Louis of France to come over to England and take the crown from one whose word they could not trust, and John asked and obtained from the Pope a legate to protect him. Success, however, favoured the party of the Barons; but fortunately for the kingdom John died on October 12, 1216.

Henry III., the son of King John, was only nine years of age at the time of his father's death. He owed his succession, as he frequently in subsequent years acknowledged, to the Pope and the papal legate Gualo. During the long reign of this sovereign many issues of great importance were raised in regard to the Church in this country. Frequent nuncios and legates visited England on papal and royal business. As often as not they were asked for by Henry himself, who was in frequent disagreement with the Archbishops and bishops of England, not only upon ecclesiastical matters, but in regard to the constant royal repudiations of promises and obligations. The Church in England was the champion of English liberties and assisted the nobles and people in their endeavour to prevent Henry from repudiating the charters he had granted and had sworn to respect, by ecclesiastical censures and solemn excommunications.

The action of the papal legates and the Popes themselves during this period has been frequently condemned by historians. It was a time of great difficulty and trouble for the papacy. On the one hand the Popes were straining every nerve to break the power of the Mahometans by means of the various Crusades they initiated, and for which Europe is so greatly indebted to them, and on the other they were involved in a long and exhausting struggle with the Emperor. The Roman Pontiffs were in grievous need of money, and of the means to reward the services of their faithful adherents.

Under these circumstances they had recourse not merely to a taxation of ecclesiastical revenues throughout the Christian world, but to the appointment of Roman and Italian ecclesiastics to benefices in England and elsewhere. In England these were known as papal subsidies and papal provisions. However much necessity may excuse these demands, they were condemned as detrimental to the best interests of religion by the ecclesiastics of France as well as by those of England, whose complete loyalty to the Papacy cannot be questioned.

Chief among the great English Churchmen of this period there may be mentioned the name of St. Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, a learned and saintly prelate. His episcopate was one long period of strife and contention, and, like St. Thomas Becket, he fled from England and died in exile. Another bishop, who occupied a great position for his learning, piety, and fearless determination to do his duty at all costs, was Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln. This time, too, saw the rise of the great Mendicant Orders. It is difficult to say which is more remarkable, the rapidity of the development of the Franciscan and Dominican friars, or the great position both in the Church and the world to which they so quickly attained in the first half century after the deaths of their sainted founders.

It was during the time of the Plantagenets, and strangely enough during the reign of King John, that our English Universities began to be renowned as schools of learning, and students commenced to come to them from other countries. This was entirely due to the action of the Church, and mainly to the personal work of such Churchmen as St. Edmund of Canterbury and Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln; whilst their efforts were seconded by the Franciscan and Dominican teachers, who soon gained a European reputation.

Bishop Grosseteste's opinion upon the position of the Church in regard to the Supremacy of the Roman Pontiff may be here recorded, since his attitude in regard to certain abuses has been so frequently misunderstood and misrepresented. In the very same letter written to the Pope's official—not, be it remembered, to the Pope himself—in which in strong language he objects to a papal nominee for a Lincoln prebend, he declares that to "the most Holy Apostolic See all power has been entrusted for edification, not destruction, by the Holy of Holies, our Lord Jesus Christ." Moreover, in another letter he puts the matter even more clearly, declaring that "to the Holy Roman

Church is due from every son of the Church the most devoted obedience, the most reverential veneration, the most fervent love, the most submissive fear." . . . "When the sun himself appears and shows his presence upon the earth, the lesser luminaries give place to the rays of the sun, being extinguished by the solar light: so does our Lord the Pope manifest his presence; for in comparison to him all other prelates are like the moon and stars, receiving from him whatever power they possess to illuminate and cherish the Church."

VII

THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

It is, of course, possible here to treat of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries only very briefly. Some matters, however, of importance and interest in the History of the Church during this period require consideration. Before the close of the thirteenth century Edward I. had come into serious collision with the English ecclesiastical authorities about money matters. All during the latter part of Henry III.'s reign constant demands were made upon English Church revenues both by the Pope and the King. The Pope was often assisted by royal authority to obtain the subsidy he desired, and the King in turn frequently asked that papal pressure should be put on his ecclesiastical subjects, to induce them to assist him out of the revenues of their benefices. It was only another step for the Sovereign to claim his tenth or fifteenth from Church property as a right, not requiring the Pope's authorisation or dispensation. This is exactly what did happen in A.D. 1295, only that Edward I. demanded a third, or at least a fourth part, of all Church revenues. He had recently employed papal authority to extract from English ecclesiastics certain payments for the Holy War, and now, under the guidance of Archbishop Winchelsea, the clergy invoked the same authority to prevent what they regarded as wholesale spoliation. At their request Pope Boniface VIII. published a Bull forbidding the clergy of any Christian country to grant away the revenues of their churches without permission of the Holy See. Upon this prohibition the English clergy took their stand; and in January, A.D. 1297, the Archbishop of Canterbury publicly declared their inability to do what Edward desired. "Under Almighty God," he said, "we have two lords—the one spiritual,

the other temporal. Obedience is due to both, but more to the spiritual." He then offered to send messengers to consult the Pope and if possible to obtain the required dispensation. This King Edward refused and proclaimed the entire body of clergy outlawed. Churchmen were thus entirely and suddenly placed at the King's mercy. As outlaws they could not appeal for justice to any court nor claim protection from the law for any injury. The northern clergy at once gave way; but as in the Province of Canterbury there was hesitation, the King's officials promptly took possession of all ecclesiastical property, and Edward intimated that should the clergy not now agree to give what he asked, he would keep as much as he pleased. They at once capitulated, Archbishop Winchelsea alone remaining inflexible. He retired with one chaplain to a small parsonage, and subsequently departed from England. When Edward I. died he was still living in exile abroad.

Under Edward III. the secular policy of the Crown was obviously hostile to that of the Holy See in some respects. This, however, in no way interfered with the full loyalty of both Sovereign and people to the Pope in all religious matters. The differences, where they existed, had regard merely to the authority claimed by the Popes over the ecclesiastical property of the country, and on this ground they not unfrequently asserted a right to bestow benefices at their will and pleasure. This matter has obviously nothing to do with the spiritual jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiffs. In these disputes this was not only never called in question, but was constantly being reaffirmed as part of the faith, or at least of the practice, of Christian nations. In A.D. 1351 and A.D. 1353 the celebrated statutes of *Provisors* and *Præmunire* were carried by the English Parliament in spite of the opposition of the bishops. The former statute forbade the introduction into the country of such Papal Bulls as dealt with "Provisions," or the bestowal of any English benefice or cure upon a papal nominee. In the first instance this law was mainly directed against the holding of English benefices by foreigners. The second, or "Statute of Præmunire," threatened with imprisonment, forfeiture of goods and other penalties, any one who should accept from the Holy See any "provision" to a benefice in England. This had, of course, nothing whatsoever to do with the normal authority of the Holy See in confirming to bishoprics, &c.

This statute of Præmunire, however, in reality amounted only to a national protest against alleged trespasses upon the Royal authority in civil matters. By its terms it is made penal for any suit to be "drawn out of the kingdom, to answer of things whereof the cognisance pertains to the King's Court." From the first its provisions were never construed against Papal appointment to bishoprics. Every vacancy of any English See continued to be filled after the passing of the Act as before in the normal way, by papal provision. In most cases the King connived at the appointment and wrote letters supplicatory to the Pope asking him to appoint "out of the plenitude of his power." All translations of bishops were also made on the same lines. Some of these papal provisions, however, were carried out in spite of the King, as in the case of Rochester in 1389, of Carlisle in 1396, and others about the same time. In 1406 the Pope provided Bishop Tottington to Norwich in spite of the royal disapproval, the King yielding in the end and giving the temporalities. In fact, within six months of the passing of the Act two of the principal Sees in England had been filled up by papal "provision." Later on, Edward III. went to Bruges and met the papal commissioners and made what appears to have been a treaty with them. Here, although a modification in practice was promised, the right of the Pope to provide in given cases was conceded. Even in regard to ordinary benefices there is evidence to show that the right of papal provision, though in practice much restricted, continued in fact to be acknowledged, or at least conceded.

Fifty years' experience showed that the statute of Provisors had operated to the great detriment of learning, and in A.D. 1399 both Universities petitioned Convocation to find some remedy. They pointed out that whilst the Popes were allowed to confer benefices by provision, the choice had always fallen upon men of talents and industry, who had obtained degrees in the Universities. The effect of this preference had been to multiply the number of students and quicken the national desire to obtain University degrees. The "Statute of Provisors" had put an end to this, and the schools at the time of the petition were almost abandoned. In A.D. 1416 the matter attracted the attention of Parliament, and the Commons petitioned the King for the abolition of the statute and for leave to be granted for the Pope to revive the practice of "providing" to English benefices.

That these laws against "provisions" were not, and were not intended to be, detrimental to the spiritual prerogatives of the Pope is absolutely certain. The great theological teacher at Oxford during the fourteenth century, for instance, was the celebrated Duns Scotus, and his works were the standard authorities at our Universities until the religious changes of the sixteenth century. His opinion on the position of the Pope in the Church may be taken, therefore, as representing English teaching on the matter. In one of his tracts, whilst discussing a question relating to Baptism, he has occasion to refer to the teaching of Innocent III., and he there says: "It is of faith that the ever Holy Roman Church, which is the pillar and ground of all truth and against which the gates of hell cannot prevail, admits no error and teaches the truth. . . . Hence they are excommunicated as heretics who teach or hold anything different from what She teaches and practises."

If this was the doctrine of the schools, the Supremacy of the Pope was no less clearly maintained by English constitutional law. Justice Bracton (a priest), who lived in the middle of the thirteenth century, was chiefly renowned for his great work upon *The Laws and Constitutions of England*, which was the standard authority on legal matters for centuries. He did not, of course, deal with ecclesiastical law directly, and so had little occasion to speak specifically of the Pope's authority; but incidentally he says: "Concerning the jurisdiction of superior and inferior courts, it is to be noted that in the first place, as the Lord Pope has ordinary jurisdiction over all in spirituals, so the King has in this realm in temporals." Further: "To the Pope and the priesthood belong spiritual things; to the King and the kingdom temporal things, as it is written, 'the heaven of heavens is the Lord's, but the earth He has given to the children of men.' Hence the Pope has nothing to do with the dispensation of temporal affairs, any more than kings and princes have with spiritual, lest either should put his sickle into the other's harvest. And as the Pope can ordain in the spiritual sphere concerning orders and dignities, so also can the King in temporals concerning grants of inheritance and assignment of heirs."

In A.D. 1349, England, in common with other countries, suffered from the most terrible scourge of pestilence which has probably ever fallen on the world. It has become known in these days as "The

Black Death," and during the few months its ravages scourged England it carried off fully one-half of the inhabitants. The clergy were everywhere devoted to their duty, and they perished at their posts in such numbers that it became impossible to fill the vacancies caused by the sickness. Many churches long remained unserved; some were never again used. In the religious houses the mortality was not less. In some, religious life was wholly destroyed, and in most the depletion of numbers was so great that they never afterwards recovered. To fill up vacancies in parish churches, young and inexperienced, and of course unlearned clerics were quickly ordained, and ecclesiastical discipline and religious teaching must have suffered considerably. One curious result, which apparently can be traced to the social changes caused by this great pestilence was a general dearth of candidates for the sacred ministry among the well-to-do class. Before this time the cleric, who was ordained upon his own patrimony, as we should say to-day, or whose family found him a "title"—that is, assured him the means of living respectably until he could obtain a competent benefice—very frequently comes up for ordination. During the second half of the fourteenth century and the whole of the fifteenth this class of candidate is much more rare, and the monasteries now furnish the greater number of candidates for Ordination, even to the ranks of the secular priesthood, and give them the necessary "title." These clerics had probably been educated in the monastic schools and were secured a "title" and otherwise assisted to enter the ranks of the parochial clergy by the religious Orders.

Before the close of the fourteenth century the orthodoxy of the Church in England was troubled by the teachings of an Oxford professor named Wyclif. Whatever may have been the cause, the fact seems certain that Wyclif, a very able and learned ecclesiastic, was embittered in early life against the Pope and the Roman Curia. This soon developed into a spirit of bitter discontent against the management of ecclesiastical affairs generally, and against the Pope, the religious, and the friars in particular. In much of this he had at first the support of John of Gaunt, the son of Edward III. Soon the critical, carping spirit hostile to all authority which Wyclif had fostered led him to attack the authoritative teaching of the Church on various points of doctrine. In regard to the Blessed Sacrament, for instance, he adopted the old errors

of Berengar and rejected the doctrine of Transubstantiation. He objected, too, to the invocation and veneration of the Saints; he rejected the sacraments of Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, and even declared that Baptism was unnecessary in the case of children born of Christian parents. The Pope he spoke of as Antichrist; and as he claimed that the Bible, interpreted as the individual reader desired, was to be the sole authority in matters of religion, he taught that to say that the Church of Rome was God's appointed witness to the truth on earth was false and foolish. The only head of the Church he would admit was the King, and his authority was derived from the people.

For these and other such teachings Wyclif was summoned to answer before Convocation on three different occasions; but under powerful secular influence he appears to have escaped formal condemnation until A.D. 1380. At the meeting of Convocation in that year twenty-four propositions selected from his works were condemned, as heretical and dangerous, by the authority of the English Church. Probably, however, on account of his failing health Wyclif himself was left unmolested. He retired to his vicarage at Lutterworth, where he was attacked by paralysis whilst hearing Mass in A.D. 1384 and shortly after died.

The poison of his erroneous teaching was not, however, destroyed by Wyclif's death. For the next twenty years or so his followers, who began to be known as Lollards, increased chiefly among the lower classes. This was probably caused as much by the social principles they adopted in accordance with their master's teaching as by any real religious conviction or through hostility to the Church. A series of risings, and many acts of violence, including the murder of Archbishop Simon Sudbury, at last alarmed the secular authorities, and the Lollards were repressed with a strong hand by Henry IV. and Henry V. From about the end of the first quarter of the fifteenth century the movement was practically stamped out, and although the doctrines of Wyclif are much the same as those adopted by the Reformers of the sixteenth century, there is in reality little or no connection between them. An examination of the works of the early English Protestant divines will show how very little they based their teaching upon that of Wyclif, sheltered themselves under his authority, or even mentioned his name. As a

religious movement Lollardry had expired in England long before the reign of Henry VIII.

It is perhaps necessary to refer briefly to Wyclif's supposed connection with the vernacular Scriptures. He is usually credited, it must be confessed on very slight evidence, with having been the first to translate the Bible into English. Whether he had anything to do with some translation of a part, or of the whole, of the Bible is a matter of small importance; but the assertion that usually accompanies the statement that the first English Bible was his work, namely, that Catholics were altogether prohibited by the English ecclesiastical authorities from reading the vernacular Scriptures in pre-Reformation days, is now practically admitted to have been made under a misconception. Further, as a mere matter of fact, the vernacular version that is known now as the Wycliffite Scriptures, has certainly come down to us from Catholic sources, and can be shown to have been in the hands of men of undoubted orthodoxy. No one who is really acquainted with the facts can of course for a moment suppose that our Catholic ancestors were not fully accustomed to the use of the Bible. The miracle plays of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries brought the whole sequence of Scripture History constantly before the popular mind, whilst the stained-glass windows and painted walls of the churches were truly "the books of the poor," ever impressing upon them the main lessons of their religion and keeping before their eyes the chief scenes from the Old and New Testaments.

The long civil wars of the fifteenth century must no doubt have had their effect upon ecclesiastical discipline and life. It is, however, at least remarkable that all during this period there was manifested a real love of religion in the general desire of the people to rebuild, to complete, and to beautify their parochial and other churches. The proof of this can be sought in almost any part of the country, and what is equally remarkable is that all this labour and money spent upon God's house during the fifteenth and in the first quarter of the sixteenth century was the labour and the money of the people themselves. It is hardly possible to ask for a better proof that the Church of their forefathers still claimed the allegiance and engaged the affections of Englishmen generally.

A word must be said about the attitude of the Church in England

to learning in general and to the movement begun towards the close of the fifteenth century, known as the Renaissance of Letters. Contrary to what is somewhat generally believed, the Church has ever shown herself the patron of sound learning, and in England in particular, not only in early times, when the action of Churchmen created our Universities, and monasteries furnished most of the schools in the country, but in later times, when the lamp of learning had been re-enkindled in Italy by the Greek exiles, ecclesiastics, and monks from Christ Church, Canterbury, were actually the first to journey over the seas and bring back the sacred flame to their own country.

In regard to the beliefs of our Catholic forefathers during the fifteenth century, there is abundant proof that in nothing had they departed from the creed of their ancestors. In the Council of Constance, A.D. 1417, at which more than a hundred English bishops, abbots, and theologians, &c., were present, a strong protestation was made on behalf of the nation against the proposal advanced by France, that England should not be allowed an equal representation with other countries in the Councils of the Church, but that it should be considered as part of Germany. This protest, after stating the reasons why England had as much right to a voice in the affairs of the Universal Church as other Christian nations, says: "Moreover, the kingdom of England, thanks be to God, has never swerved from its obedience to the Roman Church; it has never tried to rend the seamless coat of our Lord: it has never endeavoured to shake off its loyalty to the Roman Pontiffs."

Ten years later again, in A.D. 1426, Pope Martin V., in a letter to Archbishop Chicheley, states clearly not only that the Roman Pontiffs had supreme authority as a fact, but that they derived all their authority from the divine institution of Our Lord. He is bound to protect, he says, "the rights and privileges of the Roman Church and the Apostolic See, which Christ Himself gave by His divine word, and not men." This contention is fully admitted by the Archbishop in his reply on behalf of the English Church, for the idea that the papacy was of ecclesiastical and not of divine institution, which apparently in later times perplexed Sir Thomas More, does not appear to have been the traditional view of the English Church at this time, still less is there any suggestion that

England gave her obedience to the Pope on grounds of national policy or expediency, and not on a dogmatic basis. The principle is put clearly by the University of Oxford in their letter, written at the same time as that of Archbishop Chicheley. "We recognise in your beloved person the true Head," the writers say. "We profess without doubt and from our hearts (that you are) the one supreme Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ on earth and the true successor of St. Peter."

VIII

BREAKING AWAY FROM ROME

When Henry VIII. came to the throne in A.D. 1509 the English Church founded by St. Augustine had already existed more than nine hundred years. It had grown with the nation, or more truly, the nation had grown with it. The unity of the Church, under one head, the Pope, the same in Faith and government existing in the various kingdoms of Saxon England, had undoubtedly contributed the object-lesson which finally brought about the welding of the various tribes into the one great kingdom of England. In doctrine, discipline, and government the Church at the beginning of the sixteenth century was the same as that established in A.D. 597 by Pope St. Gregory the Great in the kingdom of Kent. During all those centuries the great cathedrals, monasteries, colleges and other ecclesiastical buildings which covered the land had been raised to the honour of God by the unswerving faith of the members of the one Church founded on Peter's Rock. The boast made, as we have seen, a century before at the Council of Constance, that there was no Church more loyal to Rome and the Pope, and no Church which had kept the purity of the Faith more zealously, or been less tainted with heresy than the English Church, was equally true when Henry VII. died and for many years after. That this was the case almost to the very hour of the final breaking away from Rome we have clear and distinct testimony. In 1521 Henry VIII. sent John Clerk, Bishop of Bath and Wells, to Rome to present his work on the Seven Sacraments against Luther. Clerk was received in full Consistory on Wednesday, October 2nd, and made his oration before the Pope, the Cardinals, and all the Ambassadors

of Europe. The theme of his speech was the loyalty of the English Church. "Of other nationalities," he says, "let others speak. But assuredly my Britain—my England, as in later times she has been called—has never yielded to Spain, never to France, never to Germany, never to Italy, never to any nearer nation, no, not even to Rome itself, in the service of God and in the Christian faith, and in the obedience due to the most Holy Roman Church; even as there is no nation which more opposes, more condemns, more loathes this monster (*i.e.*, Protestantism) and the heresies which spring from it." As Clerk was the King's Ambassador, this was not only a public but an official declaration.

That the nation was thoroughly Catholic at heart cannot be questioned; still it may be admitted also that the Church in life and discipline was not all that could be desired. The circumstances which had contributed to this, need not here be discussed; it is sufficient to know that many of the most learned and the best English churchmen had recognised the need in this country as elsewhere at the time of greater discipline and greater earnestness in God's work. There were, however, it would seem, no very great abuses which called aloud for redress; although here and there it appeared as if "the salt" was beginning "to lose its savour." Still it may be safely said that the idea of any change of religion never even entered into the wildest calculations, even of those who seem to have been most dissatisfied with the actual condition of things on the eve of the Reformation. They never could have imagined that the best way to beautify the house of God would be to dig up the foundations, or the proper way to begin to purify the Church would be to destroy its unity and abolish the visible Headship by the creation of a national Church.

Momentous issues often spring from small causes; and it was, in the beginning at least, a mere love affair of Henry VIII. which initiated the policy that finally dragged England into schism and heresy. In A.D. 1529 Cardinal Wolsey was disgraced and stripped of all his offices for having failed in his efforts to please the King and procure his divorce from Queen Catherine. The Pope, there can be little doubt, would have done what Henry desired had it been possible for him to do so according to his conscience and the law of God. The matter rested here for a while, and it almost seemed as if Henry would in the end

accept the inevitable, when it was suggested to him that by imitating the example of the German princes he might make himself Head of the English Church, and that then he would be in a position to settle his own matter in his own way.

To obtain the support of Parliament, Henry ingeniously contrived to suggest that the nation had incurred the penalties of *præmunire* by admitting the legatine powers of Cardinal Wolsey, although, of course, they had been exercised with the royal knowledge and by the royal authority. The laity were pardoned for this technical offence; but the clergy were excluded, with the intention of using the situation in which they were placed to secure their recognition of the King as "Supreme Head of the Church of England." The bishops thought that they knew Henry, and offered to purchase their pardon by a large sum of money. The King, however, knew his own object, and refused, unless they inserted into their submission certain clauses, amongst others one acknowledging his Headship of the Church, and another declaring that the King's protection had enabled English Churchmen to minister in peace "in the cure of souls committed to His Majesty." Convocation debated these demands during two-and-thirty sessions, and there is sufficient evidence of consideration in the changes introduced into the proposed clauses. The second of the above demands was changed by the clergy from "the cure of souls committed to His Majesty" to "the cure of souls *in the nation* committed to His Majesty." This alteration throws considerable light upon the sense in which they ultimately agreed to the first-named clause, which, as they passed it, ran, "of the English Church and clergy whose Protector and Supreme Head he alone is."

King Henry was evidently not best pleased, but for the time at least he had to be content with a statement which he must have known, as Dean Hook says, "was not at the time of the Convocation regarded as inconsistent with the legitimate claims of the papacy." In fact, when Bishop Tunstall, on behalf of the Convocation of the Northern Province, asked for information as to the exact meaning of the phrase "Supreme Head," the King replied, calling the Pope the "Head of the Church" and the "Prince of Bishops." He argued that as to call the Pope "most holy" implied no disrespect to St. Peter; and as to call a person Archbishop implied no derogation to the authority of the Pope, who was *par excellence* "the Arch-

bishop," because the addition of the name of the place safeguarded the meaning, so the proposed title of "Supreme Headship," if given to the King, would not interfere with any spiritual authority, because it only referred to the King in his position as feudal lord over the clergy in things temporal. It can hardly be made more certain that, as Froude says, "the title was not intended to imply what it implied, when, four years later, it was conferred by Act of Parliament, and when England virtually was severed by it from the Roman communion." Moreover, after this declaration bishops continued to receive their Bulls from Rome, and the King still continued to plead the cause of his divorce before the Roman Courts. He "had not formally broken off his relations with the Pope; and it is quite certain that neither Warham, Fisher, nor More would have accepted the words if they had necessarily implied a renunciation of papal authority."

In the year A.D. 1532 another step on the road from Rome was taken. An Act was passed called the "Submission of the Clergy," by which they promised for the future not to legislate in Convocation without the royal assent. In the same year Henry devised a means to coerce the Pope through Parliament. Hitherto the "Firstfruits" of bishoprics, &c., known as *Annates*, and consisting of the amount of the first year's revenue, had been made payable to the Pope for the support of the Curia. The King now induced the Parliament to declare that these payments should be made to the King, whenever he might elect to give his assent to the Act. This was purely a parliamentary measure, and the Church had no part in it. As the sum received by the Pope from this source was very considerable—the Act indeed stated that during the past forty-five years the average payment under this head had been £3,500 a year—Henry hoped to have in his hands a means whereby he could bring the Pope to his terms by threatening to stop supplies. It was in this same year, A.D. 1532, that Sir Thomas More resigned the office of Chancellor into the King's hands.

On August 22, A.D. 1532, the aged Archbishop of Canterbury, Warham, breathed his last. "We cannot doubt," writes Mr. Gairdner, "that the event at once suggested to the King a new method of achieving his end." This was by securing the appointment of a successor who would help him; and Thomas Cranmer was in every

way likely to prove himself a useful tool in the royal hands if he were promoted to the See of Canterbury. He had been a tutor in the Boleyn family, and in defiance of the then ecclesiastical laws had secretly married though a priest. Further, his first wife having died, he had recently in Germany taken to himself a second lady in the person of the niece of Osiander, the German reformer. Cranmer, who was abroad at the time of Warham's death, was sent for to England, and the Bulls of Consecration were applied for in the ordinary way from the Pope. These were obtained with all the haste possible, and Cranmer was consecrated on March 30, 1533, receiving his pallium at the same time. By a solemn act of perjury he took the usual oaths of obedience and loyalty to the Pope, although he had privately declared beforehand that he would hold these vows as null and void, and that he intended to take and hold his See from the King only.

Another step in the work of separating England from the jurisdiction of the Holy See was now taken by the King. Cranmer gave judgment on the great divorce question in favour of Henry. Forthwith the King made Ann Boleyn his Queen on June 1, A.D. 1533, having been already privately married to her five months before; the Princess Elizabeth was born on September 7th following, only four months after Cranmer had declared Henry free to marry. To prevent any interference with this so-called definitive sentence, Parliament at this same time was induced to pass an Act which prohibited appeals to the Pope from any sentence of an English court.

In the session of Parliament held in 1534 the Act for the future payments of *Annates* to the King in the place of the Pope received the royal sanction; in the same session, an Act of Succession making Elizabeth heir to the throne, was passed. This last was of greater importance than its name would imply, for in the preamble was embodied the statement of the Royal Supremacy, which had been extorted from the clergy in A.D. 1531, and which, as we have seen, was regarded by them at the time as not inconsistent with papal jurisdiction. This formula, however, could no longer be regarded as susceptible of a Catholic interpretation, since, in the spring of A.D. 1534 the Convocations of Canterbury and York under royal pressure had formally declared that "the Bishop of Rome has not in Scripture any greater jurisdiction in the kingdom of England than any foreign bishop." In March, A.D. 1534, "the submission of the clergy" was

formally embodied in an Act of Parliament, and in November the work of schism was completed by the *Supreme Head* Act, styling Henry without any reservation the only "Supreme Head in earth of the Church of England," and adding to his ecclesiastical headship the amplest powers of ecclesiastical visitation. Finally, so far as Parliament was concerned, it set the finishing touch to its work of putting all power into the King's hands by the *Verbal Treasons* Act, which passed in December, 1534; by this statute it was declared high treason even to "imagine" any bodily harm to either King or Queen, or "to deprive them of their dignity, title, style," &c.

The oath, as framed, was taken by the Universities and by many, if not most, of the monastic and capitular bodies. The bishops with one exception also gave way; the exception, of course, being Blessed John Fisher of Rochester, who, with the illustrious Sir Thomas More, refused to burden their consciences by agreeing to the demands of the King. They preferred imprisonment and death. The former received his martyr's crown on June 22, 1535, the latter on July 6th. They were joined in their valiant confession for conscience and religion by some Carthusians, Brigittines, and Franciscan Observants.

The change had been now made. That the nation disliked what had been done cannot be doubted. In spite of the Act for *Verbal Treasons* "on no other subject during the entire reign have we such overt and repeated expressions of dissatisfaction unto the King and his proceedings," writes Mr. Gairdner. The "ecclesiastical headship" was "without precedent, and at variance with all tradition," or, as the same authority says, "it was a totally new order in the Church." There can be little doubt that Henry had been pushed along faster and further than he had any notion of going when he embarked upon his ecclesiastical policy. Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Crumwell had secured a success for him beyond his dreams, and they were at hand to see that there was no turning back. It was no emancipation of the English Church that was intended or indeed carried into effect by Henry's legislation. The famous Statute 25 Henry VIII. cap 20, which requires Chapters to elect, and the Archbishop to confirm, the royal nominees to bishoprics, under penalties of imprisonment and *præmunire*, is proof that it was no measure of liberty that was intended by Henry or his advisers.

The year A.D. 1536 saw the King legislating for his spiritual flock in

his new capacity as head of the Church. He first appointed Thomas Crumwell his Vicar-General in Spirituals, and in this capacity Crumwell took the first place at all meetings of the bishops and presided at Convocation. It was then determined to have a general visitation of the religious houses, as a means for preparing the public mind for their subsequent destruction. The visitors found out in their inspections what they were expected to find, and their reports—at least so the King assured the Commons—proved that whilst the greater religious houses were well conducted, those with an income of less than £200 a year were dens of infamy. Parliament with a little careful management agreed to suppress these, and allowed the King to take possession of their property. For the next three years the destruction of monasteries, convents and friaries went on rapidly all over the country; for Henry, not content with the spoils he had obtained from the suppression of the lesser houses, cast envious eyes upon the richer prey and quickly set his agents to devise means to secure the greater houses also.

Meanwhile, in A.D. 1536, Henry through Cranmer had divorced his second wife. The Archbishop curiously enough pronounced exactly the same sentence against Anne and her child Elizabeth as he had passed three years previously on poor Catherine and the Princess Mary. This done, Queen Anne was executed, and Henry forthwith married Jane Seymour.

At length the nation rose against the religious changes in what is known as the "Pilgrimage of Grace." The insurgents demanded the abolition of the statutes against papal supremacy, the restoration of the monasteries, the punishment of Crumwell, the extirpation of heresy, and the dismissal of Cranmer, Latimer, and Holgate, the new bishops, who were known to have leanings towards Lutheranism and who had been most active against the Pope's supremacy. It is unnecessary to enter into the details of the rising. It failed; and terrible was the punishment meted out by the King on all who had taken part in it, or manifested any sympathy in its objects. Henceforth the nation appears to have acquiesced in all Henry's tyrannies and religious vagaries with silent submission. The final suppression of the religious houses flooded England, of course, with vast numbers of poor, who had hitherto found work and assistance at the monasteries. The country became a land of ruins, since the monastic buildings, which

included some of the finest churches in the country from an architectural point of view, became the common quarries from which the neighbouring people obtained stones for road-making, for building their pig-styes or their farm out-houses. Consecrated plate of all kinds and precious vestments of any value, with mitres and such like, found their way into the royal treasury as so much plunder, but blessed bells were only considered fit to break into fragments to be sold by the pound weight. For ten years there was a veritable reign of terror in England. No one was secure. Spies scattered throughout the land reported everything to their master and numerous executions constantly emphasised the fact that the King had all power in his hands, and struck terror into the minds of the people generally. The prime mover in all this was Thomas Crumwell, the Vicar-General, until he too fell a victim to his own laws and was executed in 1540.

With the separation of England from Rome, and the legal appointment of Henry as Head of the Church in place of the Pope, some further religious changes were in the nature of things inevitable. What these were seem really to have sprung from certain qualities in the King's disposition. In the first place came his avarice, which had been fed upon the spoils of the Church until it had become a ruling passion. This vice may be said with safety to explain his cutting down the honours paid to the Saints and their images and the destruction of their shrines, the prohibition of Masses for the souls in Purgatory, and his projected abolition of chantries and guilds. The second quality in Henry's character may be described as his Catholic instinct, which he never wholly lost. This forced him to oppose Crumwell, Cranmer, and others in their attempts to commit England to the full Reformation principles of Germany. In his notes upon the *Institution of a Christian Man*, a book made by the bishops in explanation of what people were to believe, the King shows his keen theological instinct. Upon the dispensation to work on holy days in case of need being mentioned, he notes, for example, "so that we neglect not Mass and Evensong." In the same spirit he condemned Lambert the heretic for his denial of the corporal Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist; he communicated always in one kind, and shortly before his death, though ill and suffering, he rose from his seat at Mass to kneel, and in answer to the remonstrances of his courtiers for thus casting himself on his knees, he said: "If I could throw myself down

not only on the ground but under the ground, I should not then think that I gave honour enough to the most holy Sacrament."

Henry's Reformation changes had regard chiefly to certain slight modifications in the Divine Service, to various Confessions of Faith and Manuals of Devotion, and to the Bible in English. The year 1538 was the high-water mark of the power of the Reforming party in his reign, and in the "Injunctions" issued in September by Crumwell, with the King's approval, all were ordered to see "to the removal of all images, which had been abused by pilgrimages, offerings, or candles set up to them," and to "the discontinuance of all permanent lights in Churches, except one in the rood-loft, another before the Sacrament, and a third over against the Sepulchre." Apart from this attack on images nothing was done against the old order except the abolition of certain holydays, at the request of the London merchants, who represented that the great number of feasts was interfering with trade. The King, however, in his private chapel continued to keep them all. On the other hand, in A.D. 1539, the continuance of the ancient ceremonies of the Church, including holy bread and holy water, ashes on Ash Wednesday, candles on the Purification, and the Creeping to the Cross on Good Friday, was ordered by royal proclamation to be observed as heretofore. Further, beyond a general erasure of the Pope's name from the missal and breviary in A.D. 1535; and later, the cutting out of the office for St. Thomas Becket, nothing was done to the official liturgical service-books. Certain manuals of private devotion were, however, printed to supersede those which had been in use in mediæval times, and in these various changes, especially in regard to the old devotions to the Saints, can be detected which point to the working of Protestant influences. This is very noticeable in the Primers, especially in the Prefaces; and the edition issued by Bishop Hilsey, with its shortened invocations, had a sort of official sanction.

Hitherto, formularies of faith other than the time-honoured creeds of Christendom, had been unknown in England. From the date of the breach with Rome in A.D. 1536, however, until the production of the Articles in A.D. 1571, Englishmen were to know a great variety of "Confessions" of their belief. At the beginning of this period of thirty-five years it was perhaps to be expected that the new Head of the Church would think well to state exactly his theological position. This he did in no less than four official declarations: "The Ten

Articles," (A.D. 1536), the "Institution of a Christian Man" (A.D. 1537), the "Six Articles" (A.D. 1537), and the "Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man" (A.D. 1539). The first of these, the *Ten Articles*, was chiefly the King's own work, in which he was assisted by Bishop Fox of Hereford. The formulary was discussed, approved by Convocation, and issued by Henry to his subjects as an authoritative declaration of what they were to believe. Cranmer made a speech at the assembly, and deliberately questioned the reality of the Sacraments, save the Lord's Supper and Baptism. The whole speech is Protestant in tone, and Crumwell, who presided, Fox and Alexander Ales (Cranmer's guest), who were present, were strong Reformers. It is consequently not surprising to find in the *Ten Articles* that only three of the Sacraments—namely the Eucharist, Baptism and Penance—are treated; and in view of Cranmer's speech, in which he declared that their business was to see whether "Orders, Anealing, Confirmation, and other Sacraments, which were not institute of Christ, were real Sacraments," the omission of these seems deliberate and advised as the result of their deliberations. The *Institution*—usually known as the "Bishops' Book," as it was not formally approved by Convocation or issued by the King—was meant to supply the deficiencies of the *Ten Articles*, as it dealt with the other four Sacraments. Both books, however, from a theological standpoint were no doubt intended to be a compromise between the Old and the New Learning and represented only a passing phase of Henry's theological teaching. The third book, the *Necessary Doctrine*, was a revision of the *Institution;* but its tone was certainly more conservative on all questions, except as regards the position and authority of the King in matters ecclesiastical. Greater prominence is given in this book to the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and the practice of Communion under one kind is specially defended and insisted upon. Finally the *Six Articles* asserted (1) the natural Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, and a doctrine identical with Transubstantiation; (2) that Communion under both kinds was not necessary for salvation; (3) that the marriage of priests was unlawful; (4) that vows of chastity were binding; (5) that private Masses should be continued, and (6) that auricular Confession was "expedient and necessary." For holding or maintaining any belief contrary to the first the penalty was to be the "pains of death by way of burning"; for any opinion contrary to the other articles the

first offence entailed forfeiture and imprisonment, the second involved the death of a felon.

It remains to say a word about the English Bible. As early as A.D. 1526 Tyndale, with the avowed object of spreading the Lutheran principles and tenets in England, had printed a New Testament abroad and procured its circulation in England. It was full of obvious and not unintentional mistranslations and glosses, and at the instance of the bishops it was prohibited by the King. This was followed by the translation of the whole Bible made by Miles Coverdale in Zurich, and at Crumwell's instigation it was allowed to be circulated in England. Then came in A.D. 1537 Matthew's Bible, and in A.D. 1539 "The Great Bible," attributed to the bishops and published with the King's approbation. Henry, however, apparently always viewed the dissemination of the vernacular Scriptures with suspicion, and at last he came to see that his fears were well founded, and that it was absolutely necessary to restrict the Bible reading to the learned. Bishop Bonner, owing to the noise and irreverence caused in churches by frequent discussions, was obliged in A.D. 1540 to remove the six chained Bibles from St. Paul's. In A.D. 1543 the King passed an Act forbidding any part of the Scriptures to be read by the lower orders, ordering all Bibles with Tyndale's name to be destroyed and all notes in other Bibles to be obliterated. In A.D. 1546 Coverdale's Bible was also prohibited, and Henry, in what was practically his last speech in Parliament, fully acknowledged the failure of his experiment in allowing promiscuous Bible reading: "I am very sorry to know how that most precious jewel the Word of God is disputed, rhymed, sung, and jangled in every alehouse. I am equally sorry that the readers of the same follow it so faintly and coldly in living; for this I am sure—that charity was never so faint among you and virtuous and godly living was never less used and God Himself among Christians was never less reverenced, honoured and served." Truly a melancholy confession by the King of the evil results flowing from his religious revolution and his attempt at Church government, made just before his death, which took place on January 28, 1547.

It may be useful at this point to pause in our survey of events and try to gain a clear idea of the actual religious situation in England at the death of Henry VIII. The English king was now practically an

absolute monarch, and the people had been taught by many hard lessons that his will was to be regarded as law. In religious matters no less than in affairs of State, for the first time in the history of the country, the monarch was supreme. This position had been secured to him by the untiring efforts and consummate diplomacy of Thomas Crumwell, the King's Vicar-General in Spirituals, perhaps the most sagacious and capable of any minister who has ever served an English sovereign and certainly one of the most unscrupulous. Under his management, and, in the main at least, as the outcome of his fertile brain, changes great and important had undoubtedly marked and followed upon the rejection of the Catholic principle of papal authority and the assumption by the late sovereign of the Supreme Headship of the Church in England. Such changes were, however, in a measure, external to the practical religious life of the nation generally. The hopes entertained by the German Reformers of winning England to the principles of the Lutheran revolt from Rome, encouraged as they had been by a temporary vacillation on the part of Henry and by their knowledge of the active support given to those principles by a band of sympathisers headed by Archbishop Cranmer himself, were doomed to be disappointed. In the end, by his royal Supremacy, Henry repressed, with a strong hand, all dangerous foreign innovations in the religious teaching and practices of the English Church, and the royal power was exerted as much against the upholders of the Reformed doctrines as against those of the "old Faith" who clung to the Pope as the main safeguard of Christian unity and the divinely appointed head of the Universal Church.

There were strange contradictions visible to all who might look. The country itself from one point of view was indeed a veritable land of ruins. Everywhere, in cities and towns, on the great high-roads and in secluded, out-of-the-way places, from one end of England to the other and across its breadth, the gaunt and blackened walls of the destroyed abbeys and other religious houses bore their plain, though silent, testimony to some great national upheaval. At the same time in the cathedrals and parish churches all over the land religious services went on very much as generations of Catholic worshippers had remembered them. Here and there, it is true, as at Canterbury, or Winchester, or Durham or elsewhere, a dismantled shrine, or altar robbed of its rich ornaments, or smashed painted

window, gave some indication of the insatiable greed of Henry, or of his strange fanatical hostility to the Saints of God in general and to St. Thomas Becket in particular. But all through the reign right to the end, in spite of all the religious upheaval, in the parochial churches, Matins, Mass, and Evensong went on as before; in the pulpits the Catholic sacramental system was taught, and the seven sacraments were administered by the clergy to the people as they had been from the days of St. Augustine then nearly a thousand years before.

It is hard to realise this strange state of affairs. The religious condition of England was a perplexity to intelligent foreigners who regarded it from a distance, no less than to the people of the country itself. To these, unquestionably, taken as a body, the King's proceedings in his ecclesiastical capacity as the head of the Church of England were unpopular and distasteful. There were of course some, perhaps many, restless spirits to whom the King's opposition to the introduction of the foreign Reformation principles into England, was as galling as it was inexplicable. But these were only the few, and as a nation, at the death of Henry, Englishmen were content to believe as their forefathers had, just as they still worshipped God in the great Sacrifice of the Mass as generations had done before them.

PART III

THE RELIGIOUS CHANGES AND THE CENTURIES OF PERSECUTION

IX

FURTHER FROM ROME INTO HERESY

EDWARD VI., the son of Jane Seymour, was only nine years of age when his father, Henry VIII., died. By careful management the Reforming party under the Earl of Hertford captured the authority. It was significant of the coming policy that Wriothesley, the Chancellor, and Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, both hitherto known as opposing innovations in religion, were left out of the Council. Hertford was made Duke of Somerset, and his brother, Sir Thomas Seymour, became Lord Seymour of Sudeley, and from the first, religious enactments occupied a good deal of the attention of Somerset, now the Lord Protector, and his counsellors.

At the outset the bishops were required to take out fresh commissions to exercise their spiritual functions just as other officials of the State, the royal power being declared in the preamble of the letters to be the source of all jurisdiction whether civil or ecclesiastical. Cranmer set a willing example of prompt obedience in this; but to the others the requirement was eminently distasteful, and Bishop Gardiner even protested at this novel and derogatory demand. Cranmer and the Council were at this time educating themselves rapidly in the principles of Lutheranism, and the Archbishop was in

constant communication with the advanced Reformers in Germany. Within a month of the King's accession there were images mutilated and destroyed in some London churches, and sermons were preached against the observance of Lent, which acts, in spite of Bishop Gardiner's protest, remained unpunished. In May the bishops were forbidden to make visitations in their various dioceses, in view of a royal visitation that was in contemplation. This order was, however, relaxed, and on the last day of June the King's printer issued two publications under the authority of the Council. These were the well-known "Injunctions" of Edward VI. and the equally well-known "Homilies." The first were addressed to all, lay as well as clerical, and their object was, amongst other things, to maintain periodical preaching against "the Bishop of Rome's usurped power and jurisdiction," and to order the destruction of images, shrines, and pictures. The Litany was no longer to be said in procession, but kneeling; and the Epistle and Gospel were to be read in English. The "Book of Homilies" consisted of twelve discourses, which had been drawn up some years before and proposed to Convocation, but had not then been approved. They were now issued by the authority of the Council.

In September, Bishops Bonner and Gardiner were sent to prison for resistance to the changes generally, and in particular for their objection to the above-named "Injunctions and Homilies," which they considered could not be properly issued with authority whilst the King was under age. Gardiner especially strongly criticised the Homily on Salvation, which was Cranmer's own composition, and he was fetched from prison for a day on purpose to argue the matter with the Archbishop. Meanwhile during this same month of September a general visitation was in progress, when by order of the Visitors the images at St. Paul's and in the London churches generally were pulled down and broken. The churches were at the same time whitewashed to destroy the painted pictures and frescoes, in place of which the Ten Commandments were written upon the walls.

Parliament met in November, A.D. 1547, whilst Bishop Gardiner was still a prisoner in the Fleet. Of the business done at this time the most important, from our point of view, was an Act about the Sacrament. It first contained a provision for the punishment of

irreverent speaking about it, which was becoming very common, and then it ordered that the Communion should henceforth be administered to the laity under both kinds, which it is right to say had previously been suggested by Convocation.

In the same Parliament the process of spoliation of the Church initiated in the late reign was continued. A Bill was passed, in spite of considerable opposition in the House of Lords—most of the bishops, including Cranmer, speaking against it—giving to the Crown all colleges, free chapels, and chantries, with all endowments for obits or anniversaries, as well as the property of all guilds and brotherhoods. By this measure not only was the gravest injustice done to the members of the various guilds, which formed the charitable associations, insurance societies, burial and sick clubs of Catholic England—the funds thus taken representing for the most part the savings of the poor—but religion suffered the gravest injury by the confiscation of chantry funds and obit revenues, which were in many, if not most, cases intended to supply stipends for additional curates in populous parishes.

Early in A.D. 1548 Cranmer intimated that the Council had abrogated the Catholic practices of blessed candles, ashes, and palms, but that no other innovations were to be made except the above, and the omission of the old ceremonies of Creeping to the Cross, the taking of holy water and holy bread, which apparently on his own authority Cranmer had already forbidden in his diocese. On March 8th was published a little book giving the "Order of the Communion," as it was henceforth to be administered under the Act of Parliament. The Latin Mass was, however, neither abrogated nor superseded, the new ritual being intended only for the communion of the laity. The most important feature in this new "Order" was the General Confession, which, as it expressly declared, was to do away with the necessity for the private confession of the individual if he had no wish to be shriven. The form was essentially that of the celebrated *Consultatio* of Hermann von Wied, the Archbishop of Cologne, which had just appeared in an English translation.

Cranmer, however, was already preparing for further liturgical changes. About this time he proposed a series of questions on the Sacrament to the bishops. One of these queries had reference to the nature of the Oblation of Christ in the Mass, and was an

indication of some serious attack about to be made upon the great Christian Sacrifice. Meanwhile Bishop Gardiner had been giving the Council no peace. He had been set free under promise to preach to their satisfaction, and he had chosen St. Peter's day, June 29, 1548, to proclaim his belief in "the very presence" of Christ's body and blood in the Blessed Sacrament. In the afternoon of the following day he found himself a prisoner in the Tower.

All was prepared for abrogating the old service books by the autumn of the year 1548. In September there was evidently some peculiar service actually being used in the royal chapel and about the same time a committee of the bishops, probably at Windsor and Chertsey, had composed the Uniform Order of prayer, which was soon afterwards laid before Parliament and received the sanction of law. On November 24, 1548, the Houses met after the prorogation, and at once proceeded to debate the question of the marriage of priests, and though the measure sanctioning it quickly passed the Commons, it was delayed till February in the Lords.

On December 14, A.D. 1548, the draft of the new Prayer Book was introduced into the Lords and a long and earnest debate followed, to hear which, it is said, the Commons flocked to the galleries. In this debate it appeared clearly that Cranmer had given up all belief in Transubstantiation and in the Sacrificial character of the Eucharist. During the course of the discussion also it was shown that the draft of the service book had been already submitted to the bishops who were then not in prison, except Day of Chichester, and that they had signed the proposed draft, but with the idea that this was not necessarily approving it. Moreover, Bishop Thirlby, in the course of the discussion, pointed out that a trick had been played upon them; in the copy which had been shown them the word "Oblation" was still to be seen in the Canon, and it had been afterwards erased without their knowledge. Parliament finally authorised the Book by a statute—the first Act of Uniformity—on January 15, 1549, ordering all to make use of it under severe pains and penalties after the determined date.

The Communion Service in the first Book of Common Prayer whatever else it is, is certainly not the Mass in English. It was so different, indeed, even to the eyes of the common people, that they christened it "a Christmas game," and this although obvious care

was taken by its compilers to preserve some outward resemblance to the ancient liturgy in the disposition of its parts. All idea of "Oblation" and "Sacrifice" had been carefully cut out of the new service, and the very centre of the ancient Mass, the *Canon*, every word and syllable of which was held sacred by the Church, which was substantially the same in every Western liturgy, was mutilated beyond recognition. The very words of "Institution" or "Consecration," also, which it might have been thought even Cranmer would have regarded as too sacred to touch, were rejected in favour of a new form taken from the Lutheran use of Nuremberg, which had been drawn up by Osiander, Cranmer's relative by marriage. In a word, both in substance and spirit the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. was conceived in a Lutheran sense. It was as little a translation of the old Catholic liturgy of the Mass as the Lutheran productions of the sixteenth century, which were ostensibly based upon an entire rejection of the Sacrificial character of the Mass.

At this period, and, indeed, from the early days of Edward's reign, Cranmer was constantly inviting foreign divines over to England to assist in the change of religion. Fagius, Alasco, Bucer, Peter Martyr and others had already found places at our Universities; for these indeed required all Cranmer's authority to turn them from the old theology to the New learning. These foreigners, however, did not, unfortunately for their peace, agree with one another as to their doctrine; for Bucer held what was considered higher views about the Sacrament than Martyr did, although they both were at one in rejecting the Catholic doctrine. Even Martyr, however, wished much for Bucer's presence in the country before he came, since in his private letters he confessed that the position in England was a difficult one for a Reformer, seeing that all who possessed any learning in the country were opposed to the new ideas.

If the changes in religion were disliked by the learned, they were equally disapproved of by the people of England generally. The new Prayer Book came into use on Whit Sunday, June 9, 1549 and the very next day the people of Sampford Courtenay, in Devon, compelled their parish priest to return to the old Missal. This was the beginning of a rising in Devon, Cornwall and elsewhere, which at one time seemed likely to be serious, as Exeter was besieged for six weeks. The insurgents sent up their "Articles" to

the Council, and they were plain demands for the restoration of religion as it was before all the late changes, and their words leave no doubt that the alterations were universally disliked. The movement was put down by Warwick with a large force, and the usual executions struck terror into the hearts of those who objected so strongly to the introduction of Cranmer's Lutheranism. In connection with this rising in the West, Bishop Bonner found himself in trouble. He was ordered to preach on the unlawfulness of rebellion, and, like Gardiner, he took advantage of a large audience assembled to hear him to speak much on the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. He was at once summoned to answer for his boldness, and took exception to Latimer and Hooper sitting as his judges, since they were, he said, notorious heretics on the matter of the Sacrament. Of course his case was prejudged. He was at once declared to be deprived of his bishopric, and on October 1, 1549, was committed a prisoner to the Marshalsea.

Just a week after this the Protector, Somerset, was himself adjudged to be a traitor, through the influence of his rival Warwick, who subsequently became the Duke of Northumberland. In another week, October 14th, the late Protector found himself lodged in the Tower. At first it was believed by the nation that his fall portended a religious reaction. Mass was again forthwith celebrated at Oxford in the college chapels and elsewhere, and even Hooper thought there were such good grounds for this idea of a return to the old religion, that he wrote his fears to his friends abroad. I expect, he said, soon to "be restored to my country and my Father which is in Heaven." Meanwhile, however, the flood of controversial and pernicious literature of the most scurrilous kind against the old religion, and in particular against the Mass, continued unchecked. "The Government really wanted argument on one side only; and it is past a doubt," says Mr. Gairdner, "that they favoured indirectly the spread of a kind of literature which they professed openly to condemn."

Parliament met again on November 4, 1549. Among other ecclesiastical business it was asked to transact early in the following year was a measure intended to further purify the churches even from external evidences of the old Faith. All images were ordered to be removed and destroyed at once, except, as the Act says some-

what comically, monumental images "of any king, prince, nobleman or other dead person which hath not been commonly reputed or taken for a saint!" In this same Parliament, on January 8, A.D. 1550, a Bill for a new *Ordinal* was introduced into the House of Peers. It gave rise to considerable discussion, and out of fourteen bishops present, five voted against it, many of the Catholic prelates being of course in prison. It is called "A New form and manner of making and consecrating archbishops, bishops, priests and deacons," and it was approved of by Parliament in anticipation and ordered to be ready for April 1. Bishop Heath, "for that he did obstinately refuse to subscribe" to the proposed substitution for the old Pontifical, was lodged in the Fleet prison on March 4. The new Ordinal did for the Catholic Pontifical what the Prayer Book had done for the Missal. Having first swept away all the Minor Orders with the Subdiaconate, the compilers carefully and systematically changed the old traditional forms of Orders in the advanced Lutheran sense. Having in the Prayer Book got rid of the Sacrifice, the Ordinal logically expunged every suggestion of the sacrificial character of the priesthood.

Ridley, one of the advanced reformers, was now established in the See of the deprived and imprisoned Bishop Bonner. He thought that, in the Visitation he made in London in the spring of A.D. 1550, he might safely take another step forward and get rid of the altars from the churches, their demolition having already been decreed by an Order of Council signed by Cranmer, Goodrich, and others, which set forth the reasons for their destruction, drawn up by Ridley himself. The abolition of the Sacrifice and the sacrificing priest had obviously made them obsolete and unnecessary. Ridley consequently directed the churchwardens to procure in their place "the form of a table," in order "more and more to turn the simple from the old superstitious opinions of the popish Mass." The substitute for the altar was to be "after the form of an honest table decently covered," and was to be placed anywhere in the chancel or choir, as most convenient. At St. Paul's various experiments were made, both as to the best position for the "Lord's board," and as to the place where the minister could most conveniently stand at it. "When your table was constituted," said Bishop White of Winchester four years later to Ridley, "you could never be content in placing the

same, now east, now north, now one way, now another, until it pleased God of His goodness to place it clean out of the church." The bishop, too, doubtless represented a very general feeling at the time when he added: "A goodly receiving, I promise you, to set an oyster table instead of an altar, and to come from puddings at Westminster to receive."

But a stronger Calvinist even than Ridley now urged on the more advanced party in the reforming direction. John Hooper, on April 7, 1550, was offered the bishopric of Gloucester and he refused it, because of the oath he would be required to take under the New Ordinal, which mentioned the saints of God; but more especially because of the vestments he would be required to wear, which he looked upon as Aaronic abominations. "You have got rid of the Mass," he said, "then rid yourself of the feathers of the Mass also." Some people were not, however, prepared to sacrifice these ornaments at once. There was some hesitation also, about letting Hooper be consecrated on his own terms, and so matters remained for another year. By that time ideas had advanced further on the down grade, and Cranmer made him a bishop according to the New Ordinal on his own terms.

The destruction of altars sorely tried the consciences of many, and in particular of some of the bishops still at liberty. It was a good indication of the lengths to which the Reforming party had already gone in destroying the old religion. Bishop Day of Chichester positively refused to obey a royal letter sent to him with peremptory orders to see that all the altars in his diocese were destroyed at once and tables substituted for them. On December 11, A.D. 1550, after every means of inducing him to comply had been tried and had failed, he was sent to join Bishops Bonner, Gardiner, Tunstall, and Heath in prison. In February, 1551, Gardiner was declared incorrigible and his See of Winchester was taken from him and given to a Reforming prelate, John Ponet, who was translated from the See of Rochester.

The same year, 1551, the poor Princess Mary was much persecuted for her determination on no account to have the new service in her chapel. She had resolved to maintain the Sacrifice of the Mass, and had up to this time managed to secure this. Now, however, one of her chaplains, Dr. Mallet, was arrested for the second time and sent to the Tower, in spite of Mary's protests, for offering up the Holy

Sacrifice in her chapel; whilst others were also arrested for being present at it.

The time was now approaching for Cranmer to take his final measures for the complete destruction of the old order. From the date of its issue there is evidence to show that he was himself dissatisfied with the First Prayer Book. He had by that time grown out of his Lutheranism, and had come, as time went on, more and more under the influence of Calvin and his adherents. Calvin wrote to him from Geneva to be active while there was time, and to eradicate the last traces of superstition; and Cranmer in return urged him to ply King Edward with letters on the matter so as to hasten on the movement. At length all was prepared. Parliament met in January, 1552, and on the first day a Bill was placed before the Lords to compel people to come "to common prayer"; but before this could pass, another Act was proposed for amending the First Prayer Book, because doubts had arisen as to the meaning of the book. What those doubts were cannot be doubtful. They were suggested by the action of those who had tried to read the traditional Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist into Cranmer's Lutheran formulary. Before the Second Book of Common Prayer came into use, commissions were sent out by the Council to seize all Church plate and vestments which had been left in the churches after the first spoliation. November 1, 1552, was the day appointed for the introduction of the new Service Book, and up to the last moment there are evidences of changes being introduced with the object of lowering the reverence hitherto shown by the faithful to the Sacrament at its reception. As to the Book itself, it is sufficient to say that it is undoubtedly Calvinistic in its conception and doctrine. Even the slight outward similarity to the Mass, which the Communion Service of the First Prayer Book had preserved, was now obliterated. To use an expression of one who lived at the time, the compilers of this new liturgy "had made a very hay of the Mass." Of the ancient *Canon*, which the Apostolic See from the earliest ages possessed and had kept inviolate, nothing was allowed to survive. Great Popes like St. Leo and St. Gregory had inserted a few words with fear and reverence into this sacred inheritance of the Church. They would have considered it sacrilegious and impious to alter or reject any part of it. Cranmer and the Edwardian Reformers felt no such scruple. They mutilated, altered, rejected, and

inserted to their hearts' content, and finally they got rid of nearly every portion of it. The outcome of their work may be studied in the Anglican Communion Service to-day, which is substantially that of the Prayer Book of A.D. 1552.

The work of destruction was completed, although even now there were indications that further reformation was intended. Fortunately, however, Edward VI. died on July 6, 1553, a few months only after the Second Prayer Book had been in use.

X

MARY RESTORES THE OLD RELIGION

On July 19, A.D. 1553, Queen Mary was proclaimed in London. The fortnight which had elapsed since King Edward's death had sufficed to secure the downfall of the Protestant party under the Duke of Northumberland, and to terminate the nine days' reign of their chosen ruler, Lady Jane Grey.

At the beginning, Queen Mary undoubtedly desired to be tolerant towards those who professed the new religion. In a proclamation issued on the day before she reached London, she urged her subjects to live together "in quiet sort and Christian charity," and to avoid making use of the "new found devilish terms of papist and heretic." On this same day Northumberland and others were brought to trial, and pleading guilty were condemned to death. On July 21st the Duke attended Mass in the Tower, and, together with the Marquess of Northampton and others, came before the altar and professed that they all desired to die in the true Catholic faith; the Duke in particular called on all present to bear witness to his belief in the Blessed Sacrament. The following day upon the scaffold he made a similar profession, and asked Bishop Heath, his confessor, to testify to the truth of his conversion.

In the matter she had so much at heart, the restoration of the old religion, Mary desired to proceed with all caution. Some of the acts of the late reign were speedily undone, as being unjust. The appeals of Bishops Bonner and Tunstall against deprivation, which they had made in vain during Edward's reign, were now

heard, and they were restored to their Sees. So also Bishops Gardiner, Heath, and Day were again recognised legally as bishops, and Bishop Voysey of Exeter was restored on the ground that, although he had resigned, he was compelled to do so "by just fear both of body and soul."

On September 23, 1553, Bishop Gardiner was made Chancellor, and on the following day—the Feast of St. Bartholomew—the Latin Mass was sung in "the Shrouds" at St. Paul's, and in at least two other London parish churches, in response to the wishes and feelings of the people. On Sunday, the 27th, the old service was again used in the Cathedral itself, and in this and the following month several solemn *Dirges*, or Offices of the Dead, were sung in the City and at Westminster, with Requiem Masses at which prayers for the souls of the departed were asked. All these things, however, were indications of the goodwill of the people, since it was only on the 21st of December following that Mass was sung as of old in all churches by Act of Parliament.

Meanwhile, before the meeting of Parliament, the foreign Protestant divines had hastened to leave London. Peter Martyr, whom Cranmer had advised to save himself by flight, obtained a passport from the Queen without any difficulty, as Mary had clearly no wish whatever to persecute. Cranmer, who had committed himself more seriously and had called special attention to himself by a prematurely disclosed challenge to a religious disputation, was on September 14th committed to the Tower on a charge of treason.

Parliament met on October 5, 1553. Meanwhile Mary had already placed herself in communication with the Pope, and Cardinal Pole had been nominated as legate. Four days also before the assembly of Parliament the Queen had been crowned at Westminster by Bishop Gardiner, having promised by her coronation oath, not only to preserve all the liberties of the realm, but to maintain the rights of the Holy See. The session of Parliament was opened, as of old, by a Mass of the Holy Ghost, at which the Queen was present, and at which Gardiner spoke explaining the need of unity in the Church of God, and confessing that he had shared with the rest in the guilt of schism. As regards the Church, the most important proceedings of this Parliament reversed the legislation of Edward's reign concerning the Sacraments, the Act of Uniformity, and the marriage of

priests. The Edwardine Church services, moreover, were tolerated only until December the 20th. The Queen permitted a discussion in the Houses about the title "Supreme Head of the Church of England," given by Act of Parliament to the Sovereign. Her own view was well known, for in the writs summoning Parliament it had already been dropped.

On November 13, whilst Parliament was still sitting, Cranmer was indicted with Lady Jane Grey and others for treason and, pleading guilty, received sentence of death. Their attainders were confirmed by Parliament just before it was dissolved, though for a time at least the sentence was not carried into effect. So far as Cranmer was concerned, however, by the sentence of death the See of Canterbury became vacant, and the jurisdiction passed into the hands of the Dean and Chapter. Meanwhile the advanced Reformers, who had taken refuge abroad, commenced to bombard England with scurrilous and offensive productions against the Queen, the bishops, and the Catholic religion. Nothing was too sacred to escape their venomous invectives. At the same time the declaration of Mary's intention to marry Philip was certainly unpopular, and so far unfortunate. Insurrections of a more or less serious nature took place in various parts of the country, which culminated in Wyatt's rebellion. All of these caused a temporary interruption in the negotiations for a complete return of England to union with Rome.

The new year, 1554, witnessed many restorations of the old ritual. Several of the Edwardine bishops were deprived; some who had been made bishops according to the new Ordinal having their episcopal character ignored in the process. The married clergy were removed from their cures, but a not inconsiderable number of those who had been rightfully ordained, after doing penance and separating from their wives, received new livings.

Parliament met at Oxford on April 2, to ratify the conditions of marriage between the Queen and Philip, and at this time was held the celebrated disputation on the Eucharist between Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and the Catholics. The doctrine of the three Reformers was naturally condemned, and they were later called upon to retract. On July 12, 1554, Philip of Spain landed at Southampton, and the Queen was married to him at Winchester by Bishop Gardiner on the 25th of that month.

In September, 1554, Bishop Bonner held an episcopal Visitation of his diocese of London. The articles of inquiry were most minute, and traversed the changes made by the acts of the late reign. The bishop required to know whether everything had been done that could be done to correct what had been put wrong. Was the priest married? Had he received irregular or schismatical ordination? Was there a proper stone altar, and did the parish supply the necessary books, chalice, vestments, &c.? Was the Blessed Sacrament reserved in a pyx hung over the altar? and other questions of this kind, which several parishes objected to, not on the ground that they were improper to ask, but because it had been impossible by that time to carry out the changes required of them.

For one reason or another, the coming of Cardinal Pole was still delayed. It was, perhaps, as well that this was so, since those who were in possession of confiscated Church property were filled with fears that reunion with Rome would necessarily mean the surrender of these possessions to the ecclesiastical authorities. Pole was able to assure them privately, however, that as the Church might alienate, it might also surrender a right, and that for the good of religion She was prepared to do so in this case. And so in November, A.D. 1554, after Parliament had reversed the attainder which still stood on the Statute roll against him, Pole landed in England. He was well received, and on November 28, he met the Parliament and declared to the members the object of his legation. The following day both Houses joined in petitioning the King and Queen to obtain pardon from the Pope for the acts of schism, and asked for reunion with Rome. On St. Andrew's Day, November 30th, Pole, after an appropriate address, pronounced the desired absolution; all—even the King and Queen—kneeling to receive it. The country thus returned to the unity of the Church Catholic.

Before the close of the year Convocation, which had received its own absolution, amongst other things petitioned that Cranmer's book on the Sacrament and the English Service Books might be all destroyed, and that the Canon law should be restored and enforced. At the same time, the old English heresy laws were most unfortunately revived by Parliament. Then followed that series of miserable executions and burnings which have left a lasting legacy of prejudice against the name of Mary and her

advisers as well as against the Catholic Church, which the lapse of three centuries has not been able to remove. "Preachers of this sort" (*i.e.*, the heroes of Foxe) writes Mr. Gairdner—"Preachers of this sort dared the fire and were prepared for it. The experience of twenty years had encouraged them to believe that papal authority was no authority at all. The experience of twenty years, on the other hand, had convinced Mary and, no doubt, her subjects generally, that defiance of papal authority had shaken the foundation of all authority whatever. Rebellion and treason had been nourished by heresy—nay, heresy was the very root from which they sprang. And it was really more important in the eyes of Mary to extirpate the root than merely to lop off the branches. She had all possible desire to show indulgence to the misguided if they could be brought to a better state of mind; and the bishops might be trusted, especially Bishop Bonner, to do their very utmost to dissuade the obstinate from rushing on their fate. . . . . Can it be wondered at that the age considered 'erroneous opinions' dangerous? The burning of heretics was a barbarous, old-fashioned remedy, but it is not true that either bishops or the Government adopted it without reluctance."

Among those that were executed under these savage laws were Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and Hooper. Cranmer had already been sentenced to death for high treason, but had been left to be tried as a spiritual man. Had all three been put to death with Northumberland few people could have condemned the judgment, and the same might be said of many others who suffered at this time and who were really criminals as well as heretics. Cranmer at first retracted his errors in the hopes of saving his life, and then finding that this did not avail him, he retracted his retraction, and died bravely at the stake on March 21, A.D. 1556.

Bishop Gardiner had passed away some months before, and on January 1, 1556, Heath, Archbishop of York, succeeded him as Chancellor. Cardinal Pole had meanwhile been appointed by the Pope to succeed Cranmer in the See of Canterbury. As he was only in deacon's orders, he was ordained priest by Archbishop Heath on March 20, 1556, and celebrated Mass for the first time at Greenwich, on St. Benedict's Day, March 21 — the very day that his predecessor suffered at Oxford. The next day, which was a

Sunday, he was consecrated bishop, and as his presence had been necessary in England he had deputed one of his canons to petition for his pallium. This he received in state at Bow Church on the Lady Day following.

By this time a beginning had already been made in restoring the monastic system. In April, A.D. 1555, the Grey Friars were installed in their old house at Greenwich, and the following year the Dominicans were set up in the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield. Nuns were again placed at Sion, Carthusians at Sheen, and the Observants opened their old home at Southampton. On November 21, 1556, Westminster had its Benedictine community once more; and Dr. Feckenham, an old monk of Evesham and late Dean of St. Paul's, put on his habit again and became Abbot of the reconstituted Abbey. There were dreams of other foundations, amongst others of a restoration of Glastonbury, but this fell through for want of funds.

The Parliament which met on January 20, 1558, is chiefly memorable from the fact that an Abbot of Westminster and a Prior of St. John of Jerusalem again sat in it. Before the end of the year all hope of Mary's life being preserved till true religious peace had been established in the kingdom was at an end. She passed away on November 17, 1558, twelve hours before her friend, Cardinal Pole.

Mr. Gairdner's estimate of her reign may here profitably be given. "History has been cruel to her memory. The horrid epithet 'bloody' bestowed so unscrupulously, alike on her and on Bonner and Gardiner and the bishops generally, had, at least, a plausible justification in her case from the severities to which she gave her sanction; though it was really not just, even to her. The spectacle of those cruel proceedings in public and the enduring recollection of them afterwards blotted out from the public mind what even at first was but imperfectly known—the painful trials which she herself had so long endured at the hands of lawless persecutors; yet it was just such lawless persecutors who had deranged the whole system of Church Government, and as Queen she endeavoured to suppress them by means which, if severe, were strictly legal. Among the victims, no doubt, there were many true heroes and really honest men; but many of them also would have been persecutors if they had had their way. Most of them retained the belief in a Catholic

Church but rejected the Mass, and held by the services authorised in Edward VI.'s reign. But, of course, this meant complete rejection of an older authority—higher, according to time-honoured theory, than that of any King or Parliament—which had never been openly set aside until that generation."

XI

THE RELIGION AS BY LAW ESTABLISHED

A FEW hours only after Mary's death, on November 17, 1558, the Commons were summoned to the bar of the House of Lords. There Heath, Archbishop of York, proclaimed her sister, the Lady Elizabeth, Queen. "Of her most lawful right and title to the crown," he said, "none could make question." No voice was raised in opposition, and a week later, when the new Queen made her entry into London, she was met at Highgate by all the Catholic bishops, who knelt to do her homage and profess their complete loyalty.

What the religious convictions of the Queen were was not at first considered, and though there were strong reasons for supposing that she would throw herself into the arms of the Reforming party, it was thought that personally she was not troubled with any very strong convictions on matters of religion. This seemed more than likely. Under Edward VI. Elizabeth had professed his varied forms of Protestantism; under her sister she had returned to the practice of the Catholic religion, and, according to one contemporary account, when the late Queen on her deathbed had conjured her to declare her real convictions, Elizabeth is said to have "prayed God (that) the earth might open and swallow her up alive if she were not a true Roman Catholic." Whatever people may have thought then about her religion, it did not prevent the popular reception of her as Queen; all parties, as she herself declared, united in receiving her with true loyalty. This should be quite sufficient to disprove the silly story that the Queen's subsequent attitude towards Catholics was caused at the beginning of her reign by the Pope's refusal to accept her as rightful Sovereign of England, and the consequent hostile reception

of her by English Catholics, in obedience to his voice. The Catholics from the first, as represented by Archbishop Heath and all the bishops, undoubtedly acknowledged her as the lawful successor of Queen Mary. Moreover, only a few weeks after her accession, Sir Edward Carne wrote from Rome to Cecil to inform him that the Pope, Paul IV., in spite of the efforts of the French, had refused to declare himself against her succession as Queen, and would be ready to recognise her if she would first formally send to acquaint him of her accession.

Two days after her reception in London, on November 25, 1558, the Imperial ambassador wrote to his master that "though no change had yet been made in religion"—that is, in hardly more than one week from her accession—it was easy to conjecture in what way lay her desires and what she intended. This was at once made absolutely clear by the constitution of her Council, in which, whilst retaining thirteen of Mary's old advisers, she placed eight of her own, all well known as favouring the "Reformed" religion. At the head of this mixed Council she put the celebrated Sir William Cecil (afterwards Lord Burleigh), to whom more than to any one else she owed the complete success of her religious policy. By Cecil's advice a secret Cabinet within the Cabinet was formed, consisting of himself and four others upon whom he could implicitly rely, and by this means he and Elizabeth were able to make all their plans for the change of religion in secret and at their leisure. The general principle upon which they acted, as stated by the Protestant historian Collier, was "that it was by no means advisable to allow of more than one Church; that the free exercise of different religions would prove an everlasting principle of sedition and disturbance."

That the Queen and Cecil had already made up their minds in the first few weeks of the reign as to the peculiar form of national religion which alone was to be tolerated, is certain. A paper of Sir Thomas Smith, one of Cecil's chief lieutenants, is still in existence, in which the whole scheme is drawn out in detail. It is a document giving instructions to a select committee of Reformers, most of whom were subsequently made Protestant bishops, to meet in December and prepare for the coming "alteration of religion." The change was to "be first attempted at the next Parliament," and great care was required to have all ready, as it was recognised that "many people of our own will be very much discontented," especially those

"who governed in the late Queen's time" and were chosen "for being hot and earnest in the other religion." To guard against this all those who were in authority, "only or chiefly for being of the Pope's religion," should be got rid of and if possible "searched by all law." In their place were to be put "such as are known to be sure in religion." And in regard to this, Elizabeth, "to maintain and establish her religion," must do what Queen Mary did. As to the existing bishops and clergy, the Queen "must seek, as well by Parliament as by the just laws of England, in *præmunire* and other such penal laws, to bring them again into order," and not to pardon until they throw themselves on her mercy, "abjure the Pope of Rome, and conform themselves to the new alterations." A Committee was then appointed to have "a plat or book" for the New Service "ready drawn to Her Highness: which being approved of Her Majesty, may be so put into the Parliament house." Meanwhile all innovations in religious worship were to be prohibited; and "until such time as the book came forth" no alterations were to be made "further than Her Majesty hath, except it be to receive the Communion as Her Highness pleaseth, on high feasts. . . . And for Her Highness's conscience till then, if there be some other devout sort of prayers or memory, said; and the seldomer, Mass."

Meanwhile the funeral of the late Queen had been celebrated with all the old Catholic ceremonies; but Bishop White, who had preached the funeral oration and had extolled Mary for her zeal in the restoration of the ancient Faith of England, found himself in prison for his boldness. Shortly after this the obsequies of the Emperor, Charles V., were also celebrated at Westminster; but here, if the Count de Feria is correct, the celebrant was an heretical minister, who left out the Pope's name in the Mass, said the *Pater Noster* in English, and otherwise made innovations which were distasteful and shocking to Catholic sentiment. Other signs of coming changes quickly followed. The Reforming divines of course returned from abroad to England and were appointed to various ecclesiastical positions. Bishop Oglethorpe, of Carlisle, while robing for Mass on Christmas morning, received an order from the Queen that he was not to elevate the Blessed Sacrament in her royal presence. To this the bishop replied, "My life is the Queen's, but my conscience is my own," intimating that he should continue to do as the Catholic rites prescribed. The Queen

thereupon left the chapel with her suite after the Gospel. Towards the end of the year all preaching was prohibited by royal proclamation, which also required that certain portions of the service should be read in English, and that "all such rites and ceremonies should be observed in all parish churches of the kingdom as were then used and retained in Her Majesty's chapel, until consultation might be had in Parliament by the Queen and the three estates."

Within two months of Elizabeth's succession, then, there was no longer room for doubt as to her intentions. As January 14, 1559, had been appointed for the Queen's coronation at Westminster, the bishops met and unanimously declared that in conscience they could not officiate. They would not, they said, go through the ceremony of anointing and crowning one who, though she still professed to belong to the old religion, had shown unmistakable evidence of a determination to revolutionise the existing state of things, and re-establish the religious conditions of the reign of Edward VI. At length, however, the Bishop of Carlisle gave way and was induced by the Queen to consent to place the crown on her head. But he did not do so until she had promised to take the accustomed oath, by which she would solemnly engage herself "to maintain the laws, honour, peace, and privileges of the Church, as they existed in the time of King Edward the Confessor." Elizabeth kept her word; she attended Mass, took the old oath, received the sacred unction, made her Communion under one kind, and conformed in everything to the ancient rites of the Catholic Pontifical.

On January 25, 1559, ten days after the coronation festivities, Parliament met. As usual in Catholic times, it was opened by a solemn Mass, at which Elizabeth was present, but by her direction the sermon was preached by Dr. Cox, a notorious Protestant. The first business transacted was the Parliament's formal recognition of the Queen's right to the throne. Unlike Mary, who had been eager to obtain a reversal of the Act by which her mother's marriage with Henry VIII. was declared illegitimate, Elizabeth contented herself with a declaration of her own royal descent, and left her mother, Anne Boleyn, still under the stigma of incest, adultery, and treason. As some one said, it seemed as if she desired to forget that she ever had a mother, and only to remember that she was her father's daughter.

Before the new laws concerning religion were proposed, an Act was

passed giving back to the Queen the firstfruits, which Mary had again assigned to their old purpose of supporting the Pope. Elizabeth also at the same time took possession again of the abbey lands and other ecclesiastical property, that had been restored to the Church, upon which she could lay her hands. When this had been done, the Act of Royal Supremacy was immediately proposed for the acceptance of Parliament. Its object was, of course, to do away with the spiritual supremacy of the Pope and substitute that of the Crown, as had been done before. Moreover, a stringent oath agreeing to this was to be taken, when required, by every one, from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the parish beadle. No one henceforth could hold any office in Church or State who would not renounce the jurisdiction of the Pope and acknowledge the supremacy of the Crown. In other words, every adherent of the old Faith was deliberately excluded from any and every position if he did not deny his Faith and sacrifice his conscience. "I desire," said one of the lay Catholics in the Commons at the time—"I desire it may be remembered that people who suffer for refusing this oath are not to be considered as common malefactors, thieves, and murderers. They don't offend from wicked intention and malice prepense. No, it is conscience and good meaning which makes them clash with the law."

Of the twenty-six English Sees ten were actually vacant in A.D. 1559, and the brunt of the battle for the preservation of the old religion fell upon the diminished number of bishops in the House of Lords. To strengthen their hands Convocation met and drew up a Declaration of Catholic Faith. This document is important and interesting, if for no other reason than because it was the last solemn pronouncement of the English Church before its final alteration. By it the English Church affirmed its belief in the existence of the "natural Body of Christ," under the species of bread and wine, "in the Sacrament of the Altar, by virtue of the Word of Christ duly spoken by the priest." It declared also its belief in Transubstantiation and in the true Sacrificial character of the Mass; also it affirmed, "that to Blessed Peter and to his lawful successors in the Apostolic See, as Vicars of Christ, has been given the supreme power of feeding and ruling the Church of Christ upon earth, and of confirming their brethren." The English Universities also gave in their adherence to these articles.

The three Acts of Parliament by which the religion of the country was changed and the Elizabethan settlement effected were: (1) The Act for the Restoration of Tenths to the Crown; (2) the Act of Supremacy; and (3) the Act of Uniformity, which authorised and imposed the Reformed Prayer Book. The bishops fought each of these Bills step by step, and unanimously voted against them. The old story that the intention of Queen Elizabeth's Government was to introduce the First Prayer Book of A.D. 1549 is disproved by facts. From the first, with three slight modifications, the liturgy adopted by the Queen's committee, half the members of which had been among the German and Swiss Protestants during the late reign, and the rest were well known as earnest and advanced Reformers, was the Prayer Book of A.D. 1552. This was introduced into Parliament in March, 1559. The authorities were foiled in their first attempt to force it through; how or why does not appear. They were not, however, baffled, and on March 17th a new Bill was proposed: "That no person shall be punished for using the religion used in King Edward's last year." This was pushed through the House in two days, and was more than the thin edge of the wedge. After Easter had passed, in April, the proposed Book was re-introduced and carried on April 28th by a bare majority of three votes, and without the support of a single spiritual Peer. The famous speech of Bishop Scot and that of Abbot Feckenham, in which they challenged the world to produce a single instance where the bishops were not consulted and listened to in a controversy of this kind, were the last constitutional efforts made by the old religion to stay the innovations. That their weighty arguments were not wholly unheeded may be judged by the very narrow majority which carried the religious revolution. Had there not been so many Sees vacant at this time there can be no reasonable doubt that the intentions of the Government, for a time at least, would have been defeated, and the new Prayer Book rejected. As it was, however, the Elizabethan settlement rested upon the infallibility of the odd three.

The Act of Uniformity did more, of course, than sanction the Protestant Prayer Book. It made its use obligatory under grave penal enactments. Any clergyman who did not use it was fined for the first offence, deprived of his benefice for the second and imprisoned for life for the third. All persons absenting themselves from

Church on Sundays were to be fined for each offence, and the amount of the fine increased as time went on. This Act and that of Supremacy formed the basis of the restrictive code of laws, which, as Hallam says, "pressed so heavily for more than two centuries upon the adherents to the Romish Church."

No sooner was the Elizabethan settlement of religion accomplished by these Acts of the Parliament of 1559 than the Queen issued a set of injunctions, which were probably the work of Cecil. The commissioners appointed to carry them out were, with one exception, laymen; yet they received ample powers to visit and reform all cathedrals and churches and to inquire into the faith, &c., of the bishops and clergy; to induct to benefices, to convene synods and to perform every episcopal and sacerdotal function except that of Ordination, Consecration and the administration of the Sacraments. Before the December of this year, 1559, the bishops had all been dealt with by these commissions. They were put to the test of the new oath of Supremacy, and all unhesitatingly refused, with the exception of Kitchen of Llandaff, whom Godwin calls "the shame and reproach of his See." Those who were constant to the old Faith, to the number of fifteen, were deprived and most of them imprisoned more or less strictly. The exceptions were Scot of Chester, Pate of Worcester, and Goldwell of St. Asaph, who escaped abroad.

Thus with one exception the whole of the Catholic Hierarchy had been deposed in one batch by the civil power, and placed in, what Camden euphemistically calls, "free custody." No doubt some only of them underwent the rigours of the prison dungeon; but it may be questioned whether to them enforced detention for years in the houses of the new bishops, with the obligation of consorting with their wives and families, would not have been more distasteful and more personally degrading than the stricter confinement of prison walls.

After the bishops, came the turn of the clergy. The first Visitation, made in 1559 for the purpose of tendering the oath, was so barren of results that after it had lasted six months it was abandoned in December. In brief, it may be said that the purpose of the visitors was mainly defeated by the majority of the clergy refusing to attend according to their summons. In the province of York, out of ninety priests summoned only twenty-one took the oath, thirty-six came

and refused it, seventeen were absent. In the province of Canterbury whole bodies like the Dean and Canons of Winchester, the Warden and Fellows of the College, and the Master of St. Cross all refused the oath. For the whole province the visitors omit the absentees and give the number 786 conformists and 49 recusants. Out of 8,911 parishes and 9,400 beneficed clergymen only 806 took the oath. It is probable that in the north and west of England in particular many of the Catholic clergy were left undisturbed till three years later, when a second Visitation was ordered. At that time many of the married clergy ousted by Mary were reinstated, and the large number of vacant benefices attested the loyalty of great numbers to the old Faith, and compelled the authorities to ordain to the ministry that motley crowd of new clergy described by Prebendary Heylin in his History. This also alone explains why, as Hallam says, "for several years it was the common practice to appoint laymen, usually mechanics, to read the Service in the vacant churches."

The entire bench of bishops having been got rid of, it became necessary to devise means to supply their places, for Elizabeth and her Council, unlike the foreign sectaries, decided that the "Settlement" scheme should include bishops as well as ministers. It was apparently, indeed, for a time undecided whether this distinction should be kept, but ultimately for many reasons it was arranged that it should be. These bishops, even to satisfy the scruples of the popular conscience if for no other, must be consecrated, but the difficulty of obtaining consecration was somewhat serious. An Archbishop by the law had to be consecrated by an Archbishop or by four bishops, and, as Cecil wrote at the time, "there is no Archbishop and no four bishops, what is to be done?" The various commissions that were issued show the straits to which the Government were reduced. Finally, however, the foundation of the new Hierarchy was constituted by the consecration of Archbishop Parker. Bishop Barlow, whose own consecration must always be doubtful, officiated, and two Edwardine bishops, with Hodgkins, a suffragan consecrated under the old rite, assisted at the ceremony, which was performed according to the Ordinal of Edward VI. Parker without delay filled up the other vacant Sees, and the Elizabethan Settlement of religion was completed. Whatever invalidity there might have been was legally

supplied by the sovereign in virtue of the plenitude of jurisdiction which was considered to reside in her.

The rest of Elizabeth's reign, so far as Catholics are concerned, is mainly a record of persecution. Once in 1569, in the northern parts, they rose in defence of the Faith of their ancestors, and for a time they met with success. Their minds were swayed by religious fervour; they were all Catholics at heart, as the Queen's agent in the North wrote: "There are not in all this country ten gentlemen that do favour and allow of Her Majesty's proceedings in the cause of religion." Durham was the scene of their first act of hostility, and there the Communion table was thrown down and Mass was celebrated again in the old cathedral, in the presence of many thousand people. But the reverse came quickly, and the usual Tudor executions restored the Queen's power, and the memory of "rivers of blood" long remained as an object-lesson to the dissatisfied. Those who were pardoned only secured it by renouncing their religion and taking the oath of Supremacy.

Events took place in the second half of the century which considerably aggravated Protestant hatred for Catholics and led to the passing of penal laws of ever-increasing severity, in A.D. 1571, 1581, 1585, 1587, 1593. The pathetic position of Mary Queen of Scots excited the pity and compromised the safety of many English Catholics, who, however sympathetic, were falsely supposed to be endeavouring to compass Elizabeth's death to secure the accession of the Catholic Mary. But what more than all else called up the rigours of persecution against the adherents of the old religion was the foundation of the seminaries abroad for the education of Catholic missionaries. This movement, which originated with the opening of Dr. Allen's Doway Seminary in 1568, led to the creation of many other centres for the same purpose abroad, such as at Valladolid, Lisbon, Seville, St. Omers, and later at Rome itself. Cecil quickly realised what this meant. He had counted on the gradual extinction of the old Marian priesthood and the consequent dying out of the old Faith among a people left without priest or teacher. The creation of these seminaries entirely upset his calculations; from them were constantly being poured into the country zealous and single-minded men by the score and the hundred, who did much more than supply the place of the clergy who were dying out. In 1580 the first Jesuits

found their way into England, and they were followed in a continual stream by other members of the same order. From this time the persecution began in earnest.

What contributed greatly to increasing the trials of the English Catholics was the embarrassing and painful excommunication pronounced against Elizabeth in 1571 by Pope Pius V. It furnished the Government of the time with a weapon they were not slow to use, and it made it appear as if a political offence might be considered at least as part of the religious offence of their Faith. Henceforth Catholics for being Catholics were treated and punished as traitors. For the last twenty years of this reign, every year, with only one exception, there were numerous executions for religion in England. Most of those who suffered death were priests, and there are recorded the names of nearly two hundred of these martyrs for conscience and duty. Thousands of men and women were also punished by fines and imprisonment for their refusal to obey the statutes passed to secure the Queen's religious Settlement, and these underwent a slow martyrdom under the pressure of the recusancy laws, compared with which even the scaffold would often have been a relief. Nor must it be forgotten that all during the latter part of the sixteenth century the rack, the thumbscrew, the Scavenger's-daughter, the Little Ease, and other tortures, were being constantly requisitioned to convert "papists" from the error of their ways to the new Protestant religion as by law established. But it was a battle for conscience' sake. To them, as has been said, "it was the Mass that mattered," and how could they consent to attend a service which had been designedly drawn up as a rejection of the Mass altogether, even when refusal meant the sacrifice of all their possessions, with prospective imprisonment and torture? "It was the Mass that mattered," and to that the persecuted people clung. "It fills me with amazement," writes Father Parsons in 1580 from England, "when I behold and reflect upon the devotion which Catholics in England show by gestures and behaviour at Mass; for they are overpowered by such a sense of awe and reverence that . . . when the Lord's Body is elevated they weep so abundantly as to draw tears, even involuntarily, from my dry and parched eyes."

XII

TWO CENTURIES OF PERSECUTION

THE story of the Catholic Church in England cannot be concluded with A.D. 1559 and the triumph of the Reformation. The attempted destruction of the old Faith and the establishment by law of the Protestant religion, it is true destroyed the Catholic Hierarchy and transferred the legal possession of the cathedrals and other churches from the old owners to the new, and structurally adapted them, by the destruction of altars, roods and images, &c., to the new non-sacrificial liturgy. But the Catholic Church survived the storm and stress of Elizabeth's days, and that they did so excites to-day our admiration for and wonder at our brave Catholic ancestors. Unfortunately they were divided in many matters of policy amongst themselves, and for a long period, through the influence of some parties at Rome, the Catholics of England were left without the help of bishops. In fact, until A.D. 1581 there was really no head save the successors of St. Peter. In that year Gregory XIII. appointed Dr. Allen "Prefect of the English Mission," and until his death in 1595 he contrived, as best he could, to administer the ecclesiastical business from abroad. Allen appears, moreover, once at least, to have visited England during this time. He went about the Catholic homes of Lancashire making the heads of families swear never to take part in the Protestant services, and so saved the Faith at least in Lancashire. From 1598 to 1621 the Church in England was administered by Archpriests; after that time for more than two centuries by Vicars-Apostolic.

The bare lists of executions, rackings, and imprisonments can give but a very inadequate idea of the sufferings endured with heroic

constancy by the Catholics during the last quarter of the sixteenth century. It is impossible to sketch any picture which can give a proper notion of the life they must have led; constant alarms, torturing suspense, mental agony was the lot of whole multitudes from week to week for years together. No one was safe. Visitations and searches by the priest-hunters looking for their prey; information lodged in secret; frequent attendance at meetings of commissioners and magistrates for the purpose of cross-examination; detention in gaol or confinement to the precincts of a house or estate, was the common fortune of those that were staunch to the old Faith. But worst of all must have been the amount of privation and positive destitution and ruin caused by the exaction of the fines for refusing to come to Church. None but the rich could afford to pay £20 a month (at thirteen months to the year) "for refusing to come to Church where Common Prayer is said," and they only did it by sacrificing and selling their estates. During the last twenty years of Elizabeth's life she actually received in hard cash from this source £120,305 19s. 7½d., a vast sum for those days. Every time also Catholics could be proved to have heard Mass there was a fine of a hundred marks, and they were liable to great penalties and even to be hanged as felons. On any special occasion they could be lodged in the nearest county gaol at their own expense, had to pay double tax, and were frequently placed under the watchful care of their Protestant neighbours, or forbidden to stir more than five miles from their homes without a licence of the bishop of the diocese or the deputy-lieutenant, on pain of forfeiting their goods and all the profits of their lands for life.

The marvel is that the measures taken by the Government did not succeed in "eradicating popery" from England. That it did not was not the fault of the executive. They did their best. In 1584 Bishop Cooper found the number of recusants in his diocese so great that he advised drastic measures. His plan was "that a hundred or two of the obstinate recusants, lusty men, well able to labour," should be shipped over to Flanders as convict labourers. And in the same year the Clerk of the Peace for the county of Hampshire states that "at every session the indictments against" the recusants are at least one hundred and forty, and he adds that both his time and that of the magistrates is chiefly taken up over these religious

prosecutions. It was the same all over England, and, when at the close of the reign after the penal laws had done their worst, there were some that reckoned the adherents of the old religion still as the majority in the nation.

One word must be said about the attempt made at the close of the sixteenth century, which has indeed been revived since, to minimise the cruelty of Elizabeth's executions on the ground that the priests suffered not for their religion, but for treason. Hallam long ago protested against the needless addition of insult to injury, and the non-Catholic authority, Mr. Beesly, declares that these "attempts to excuse such legislation as prompted by political reasons can only move the disgust of every honest-minded man." "To say," writes Sydney Smith, that because "a law is passed making it high treason for a priest to exercise his functions in England," when a priest is caught and executed, that "this is not religious persecution," but the just punishment of an offence against the State, is absurd. "We are, I hope, all too busy to need any answer to such childish, uncandid reasoning as this."

Hopes of better treatment had been raised among the Catholics by the accession of James I. in March, 1603. It seems certain that chance expressions of the King had led them to believe that some form of toleration would be extended to them. These expectations were soon doomed to be disappointed; James re-enacted the penal laws, and this has been assigned as the cause leading up to what has been known as the Gunpowder Plot. How far the conspiracy of a few individuals furnished the Government with the material upon which to embroider all the traditional horrors and minute details need not be here discussed. It is sufficient to point out that it is now admitted that the Catholics, as Professor Rawson Gardiner says, "were subjected to a persecution borne with the noblest and least assertive constancy, simply in consequence of what is now known to all historical students to have been the entirely false charge that the plot emanated from, or was approved by" them "as a body." The result to Catholics was, as might have been foreseen, disastrous; fines were increased, or more carefully exacted, and new means of subjecting the adherents of the old religion to petty persecutions of all sorts were invented. All was borne, we are told by the authority on this period as quoted above, "with the noblest and least assertive constancy."

Matters might have been rendered less difficult for the unfortunate English Catholics had they been permitted, at this time, to take an oath of allegiance to James. The terms of the declaration which denied the "deposing power" of the Pope was fully approved by the Archpriest Blackwell and many other ecclesiastics. The question was referred to Rome and the Pope refused his consent. Despair seized upon many of the Catholics and not a few conformed to the Established Church.

The marriage of Charles I. to Henrietta Maria, a Catholic, gave better courage and some heart to the Catholics. For the first time for many years Mass was said publicly both in the Queen's chapel, and in the chapels of the various ambassadors, at which large numbers assisted. Papal envoys were also received at the Court, and did something to better the conditions of the Catholics, but little else. Panzani, one of them, was chiefly instrumental in obtaining the appointment of a bishop. All this time the Sacrament of Confirmation had not been administered in the country, and the Holy Oils for Extreme Unction and Baptism had been obtained from Flanders or the Low Countries as opportunity served. The Papal envoy found, as he calculated, that there were about 150,000 Catholics in England. A great variety of opinions existed even amongst the faithful as to what was lawful and what was not. For instance, the payment of Easter dues to the Established Church was a great source of difficulty, as the receipt implied that the person who paid had already communicated at the Protestant Communion service. The oath of allegiance, too, was another source of doubt and disagreement. There was no talk of any oath of Supremacy: that had been dropped altogether for Catholics; but the King demanded the oath of allegiance, and there was a very large party in favour of taking it; others were equally strong against it, and the authorities at Rome sided with the latter.

On the approach of the civil war Charles appealed to his Catholic subjects, and through his Queen he promised to remove all penal statutes if they would support him. This they did with unanimous loyalty, which upon the success of the Parliamentarians did not improve their condition during the Commonwealth. On the Restoration, however, Charles II. wished to requite their fidelity to the Stuart cause by granting toleration, but the anti-Catholic feeling was altogether too strong, various circumstances having just at this time

tended to aggravate it. Every misfortune and calamity was popularly attributed to the luckless "papist." The inscription on the monument commemorating the Fire of London may be taken as an instance. The misfortune was ascribed to "the treachery and malice of the Popish faction." Charles did what he could, and, besides proposing an Emancipation Bill he persistently refused to consider the Bill which was intended to exclude his brother James, Duke of York, from the succession. But the bitter and unreasoning hostility to Catholics grew rather than diminished towards the close of his reign, and as one of the results of the infamous fictions of Titus Oates, two thousand persons were imprisoned on suspicion of being implicated in a plot, and a number of priests and laymen suffered death as traitors on his perjured statements. The two last Catholics to fall victims to their religious convictions were William Howard, Viscount Stafford, in 1680, and Oliver Plunket, Archbishop of Armagh, the following year. In 1685 Charles II. died, having received the grace of conversion, and before his death being received into the Catholic Church by Father Huddleston.

James, Duke of York, succeeded his brother as James II. at a most unfortunate time for Catholics. It would have required great tact and prudence, as well as the capacity for waiting on opportunities, to do any good whatever to the cause that the King had at heart, the restoration of the Catholic religion. James possessed none of these qualities. He was a Stuart; incapable of understanding or even seeing difficulties, of yielding his will, or of tolerating other views but his own. It is impossible to imagine a more foolish policy than he from the first adopted. During the four short years he occupied the throne, he contrived to arouse the distrust of all his subjects, and certainly left an increased legacy of difficulties to the Catholics when, in 1688, Dutch William had established himself on the throne of England.

Within a few years of the accession of William of Orange, new penal laws against the unfortunate "papists" were passed by the Commons, which seemed to promise the speedy extirpation of English Catholicism. "The experience of Elizabeth's reign," says a writer on this period, "had shown that the infliction of actual death roused a life-giving enthusiasm among Catholics themselves and sympathy in the witnesses of their sufferings. The penal system now introduced

was the preference for gagging a man, binding him hand and foot, bandaging his eyes, and imprisoning him for life, rather than killing him outright."

It was now made a crime for a Catholic to possess arms or a horse above £5 in value. Perpetual imprisonment was to be the punishment for saying Mass or keeping a school. Every informer who could secure the apprehension of a priest was to receive a reward of £100. Catholics were declared incapable of inheriting lands, and the next of kin who was a Protestant could claim the inheritance, and a Catholic could not purchase lands or estates after April 10, 1700. Such are some few of the penal enactments by which the new policy of William strove to destroy the last remnant of the faithful adherents to the old Faith of their fathers.

For the next century the history of Catholicism in this country is the story of one long, patient, but determined endurance. Theirs was the attitude of a man conscious of innocence, but condemned to lifelong solitary confinement, who nerves himself to resist either death or loss of reason. It is indeed hardly possible to exaggerate the hopeless condition to which Catholics were reduced by this new system of repression. While the statute book still recorded laws against his property, his liberty, and even against his life, which were held in terror over him, and which at times through spite or religious fanaticism were even invoked against him, he was sedulously shut out from all participation in the national life of his country, and all professions were equally barred against him. At first, and for a generation or two, Catholics had struggled to free themselves from the strong grip of the State upon their throats, which was intentionally choking the life out of them. Like a suffocating man under like conditions, some did not stop to think whether their efforts to free themselves were either right or politic, or could be justified by the cut-and-dried principles of casuistry. It is easy for us who do not feel the strong arm of the law ever threatening our existence to criticise and condemn the action of this or that individual amongst them, who, when they and others lay helpless, and writhing and dying, thought to make terms which would let them breathe again and give them back life and hope. But before the close of this period even these bids for liberty were things of the past. Hope had departed from the breasts of Catholics, and almost the only prayer which, in the records

of that terrible time, the historian can recognise as uttered by that rapidly dwindling body, is one for resignation and for the grace to be at least left to die in peace.

There were, of course, exceptions; but gloom and despair seem to have settled down as a black cloud over English Catholics from the middle of the eighteenth century. Those who persisted in acting and agitating were looked upon, even by those for whom they fought and strove, as dangerous disturbers of a tacit truce, and as men who by their indiscretions might well bring down again upon the heads of all the rigours of active persecution. Sad indeed—terribly sad—is the lot of that band of the faithful few at that time. In all the chronicles of history I know of no page which records a more touching and more heartrending story than that of this yearly diminishing remnant of those who had never bowed their knees to Baal, who had undergone the long-drawn agony of a life martyrdom for the Faith of their fathers.

Hope itself had well nigh departed: and in the darkest hours that went before the dawn of better times the thoughts of many hearts were but little removed, except by resignation to God's will, from blank despair. Still some souls chafed at the situation and at the precarious condition in which they found themselves. "Shall I," wrote one of them—"shall I sit down silently satisfied, because the good humour of the magistrate chooses to indulge me, whilst there are laws of which any miscreant has daily power to enforce the execution? My ease, my property, and my life are at the disposal of every villain, and I am to be pleased because he is not at this time disposed to deprive me of them. To-morrow his humour may vary, and I shall then be obliged to hide my head in some dark corner, or to fly from this land of boasted liberty."

In A.D. 1778 Sir George Savile carried in Parliament a Relief Bill for Catholics, which was intended to redress some of the most glaring items of legal injustice which Catholics had long endured with all the fortitude of Christian martyrs. It did not effect much, but it was the beginning, and "it shook the general prejudice against Catholics to the centre. It restored to them a thousand indescribable charities in the ordinary intercourse of social life which they had seldom experienced." To obtain relief under this Act the Catholic was required to take an oath abjuring the Pretender, rejecting

the deposing power of the Pope, and condemning the doctrine, supposed to be taught in the Roman schools, that faith need not be kept with heretics, and that all such heretics could at any time be lawfully put to death. It is difficult to imagine that an oath of this kind could ever have presented any difficulty to the mind of an English Catholic, except in so far as it was a reflection upon his intelligent apprehension of his religion. Yet it was precisely here that the difficulty of arriving at any *modus vivendi* had lain for generations. Now, however, the Vicars-Apostolic accepted the conditions, and as a sign of this on June 4, 1778, they ordered public prayers to be said in all churches for the King.

This very small measure of justice provoked an anti-Catholic agitation which culminated in the Gordon riots. It is in the attitude of many Catholics at this time of trial that we have revealed to us in the most striking manner the pitiable condition to which the long-endured persecution had reduced them. The laity were, with some exceptions, afraid of courting observation and reckoned their obscurity to be their security. They hardly dared to show their faces for fear of the law being called in to lash them back to their hiding-places. According to one who lived at the time, and had every means of knowing the facts, "they were very prudent, very cautious, very provident and very timid. . . . When the tumults of last summer (1780) was raging in the metropolis" their voice "was heard tremblingly giving counsel: 'For God's sake,' they said, 'let us instantly petition Parliament to repeal this obnoxious Bill; it is better to confess that we are guilty of all the crimes laid to our charges than to be burnt in our homes.' They even dared to carry about a form of petition to that effect praying for the signature of names. 'We told you,' continued they, 'what would be the event of your addresses to the throne, your oaths of allegiance, and your repeal of laws.'"

This, however, was the turning-point, and twenty years later Catholics had already begun to understand the advantages even of toleration, and had by their organised agitation and above all by the help extended to them from Ireland secured other measures of liberty. Looking back upon the time that was then happily past, the great Daniel O'Connell, addressing the Catholic gentry, said: "My thoughts turn to that period in your history when religious dissension assembled all its elements together and scattered to the wind the Faith

and ritual of your forefathers. Sad, indeed, since that time has been the record of religion and its sufferings in England. He who would follow it seems to see himself as though present at a shipwreck where nought may be discerned on every side but scattered and disjointed fragments—but still the hull was left; it was the heart of oak, and while that survived there was hope for those who clung to it. I know well how difficult the position of Catholics has hitherto been, how constantly against them the efforts of the persecutor had been directed; how for three centuries, indeed, they had borne the whole weight of oppression which crushed down their Catholic fellow-countrymen even to the dust, the blood of their noblest members rendered its own red testimony upon the scaffold, in devoted vindication of that Faith which the first missionaries to these shores had preached to their ancestors. . . . Others indeed survived, but it was only to endure a lingering martyrdom never to cease but with the natural duration of life itself. More happy far were those whose martyrdom was consummated on the scaffold, for them at least their sufferings were ended, and they entered at once into their reward in bliss. But the less fortunate survivors saw themselves doomed, without reprieve, to lives of suffering, contumely, and ignominy of every kind at the hands of the basest and most ignoble of their Protestant countrymen. And they stood it nobly!"

XIII

THE SECOND SPRING

WHAT happened after the centuries of persecution is best described under the title of Cardinal Newman's immortal sermon, preached at the first Synod of the Catholic Church held in England since the days of Cardinald Pole. *Succisa virescit:* though cut down and stripped of its ancient external glory, the sap began to rise and the old trunk put forth again leaf and bud and bloom, the promise of a new and fruitful life. It was indeed a "Second Spring."

To understand the change it is necessary to know something of the state to which the persecution had reduced the Catholic Church in England. In 1780, according to the only statistics available, English Catholics numbered only 69,376, but Joseph Berington, who lived at the time and had every means of knowing, considered that this estimate was too high and that in reality they were not more than 60,000. Of this number the Bishop of Chester, who be it remembered strongly advocated Catholic Emancipation in 1778, claimed to have in his diocese, which included Lancashire, 27,228; or about two-fifths of the entire Catholic population of the country. It was at this same time estimated that, in the twenty years between 1760 and 1780, whilst the general population of the diocese of Chester had greatly increased, the Catholics had also increased, but only by 2,089. In the rest of England, however, there had been a decrease in their numbers. In many of the dioceses there are said in the returns made to Parliament not to have been fifty Catholics, and in some not even ten. At this period the total population of England and Wales was estimated

at some 6,000,000. In other words in 1780 the Catholics formed little more than 1 per cent of the English people.

The particulars which Berington collected are most distressing reading. In the West of England, South Wales, and some of the Midland counties, he says, "there is scarcely a Catholic to be found." The residences of the priests gave the best indication of the whereabouts of Catholics, and, after London, the greatest number of clergy were in Lancashire, Staffordshire, and in the northern counties. Some large manufacturing towns such as Norwich, Manchester, Liverpool, Wolverhampton, and Newcastle had chapels which were reported to be rather overcrowded. Except in the larger towns and in Lancashire the chief situation of Catholics was in the neighbourhood of old families who had remained faithful. They were mainly the servants and children of servants who had married from these families and who chose to remain round the old mansion for the convenience of religious exercises and because they hoped for the favour and help of their late masters.

In the opinion of the same writer, who had taken considerable pains to arrive at the truth, Catholics had rapidly decreased in numbers during the eighteenth century, and the shrinkage was still going on in 1780. Many congregations, he says, have disappeared altogether, and in one district "with which I am acquainted eight out of thirteen missionary centres are come to nothing, nor have new ones risen to make up in any proportion for their loss."

As to priests, Berington puts them at about 360 in the whole of England, "which I think," said he, "is accurate." In 1781, the year Berington wrote, in the Midland District there were fourteen missionary stations vacant, and some families had to go five and even ten miles to church. Catholicity in the whole district was declining, and Catholics were only 8,460, and hardly more than two-thirds of the number they had been thirty or forty years before. The Western District comprised eight English counties, together with North and South Wales. This vast field of labour had only forty-four priests to work in it, and this number appears to have been adequate to the needs, as the Catholics are said to have been only "very few." Even the London District, which extended over nine counties in the South of England, is reported in 1780 to have only fifty-eight priests to serve for all purposes. There were then five places vacant for which

no priest could be found, and the Catholics were reported to be dying out except in the metropolis.

As for schools, the mitigation in the penalties for keeping such establishments did not for some years lead to any visible increase in their number. In 1780 Berington knew of only three boys' schools of any note: "one in Hertfordshire (that is, at Standon, afterwards Old Hall), one near Birmingham in Warwickshire (Baddesley Clinton), and one near Wolverhampton" (Cotton or Sedgley Park). In London he records the existence of some small schools for boys, adding "in other parts there may be perhaps little establishments where an old woman gives lectures on the Horn-book and the art of spelling." For girls, the same authority only knew of the two long-established schools, one at Hammersmith and the other at York.

Such was the melancholy position of Catholics at the time of the Gordon riots. The bolder spirits among them were, however, not daunted by that outburst of fanaticism which the small measure of relief had called forth from the latent Protestantism of the land. They continued their agitation, and in February, 1788, a committee of English Catholics appealed directly to Pitt to help them. Pitt replied by asking them first to collect evidence of the teaching of the recognised Catholic Universities as to the "deposing power of the Pope." This they did, and obtained from the Sorbonne, Doway, Louvain, Salamanca and elsewhere declarations against that opinion. Acting upon this the great body of Catholics, including the Vicars-Apostolic and almost all the clergy, signed their protestation against this teaching. This led in 1791 to a further measure of relief, by which the legal profession, from barrister downwards, was thrown open to Catholics, and some of the most irksome provisions of the still existing penal statutes were annulled. The Vicars-Apostolic issued letters upon the passing of the Bill saying that people could with safe conscience take the required oath. The *Catholic Directory* of 1792 sets forth the approved form of solemn declaration which explicitly rejects the "deposing power of the Pope" and the supposed Roman teaching, that faith was not to be kept with heretics.

The further progress of emancipation was only a question of time. Many influences were at work on the minds of English statesmen, which assisted the unwearied efforts of a band of English Catholics, who were determined to carry the full measure of justice, in spite of

every obstacle put in their way. The French Revolution came as an object-lesson to politicians, and made them see that the Catholic Church in reality made for law and order, and that its principles were opposed to the spirit of revolution and anarchy which seemed to have gained so serious a foothold in Europe generally. During the pontificates of Benedict XIV. and his three immediate successors, the influence of the Catholic priesthood had been uniformly employed to support authority, whilst, as Mr. Lecky points out, nearly all the political insurrections had been among those professing Protestant principles. Edmund Burke, too, used the power of his eloquence in favour of the Catholic cause, and, pointing to the attitude of the French revolutionary party towards the Church, said: "If the Catholic religion is destroyed by the infidels, it is a most contemptible and absurd idea that this or any other Protestant Church can survive the event."

The hospitality extended by England to the French exiles, and in particular to the Catholic priests, did much to familiarise the people generally with Catholics and Catholic clergy, and to teach them that many of the stories they had been taught to believe about us and our religion were obviously untrue in fact. In September and October, 1792, more than 6,000 French bishops and clergy had been received in England, and this number was subsequently increased to 8,000. Collections for their support were made in every Protestant parish church in England, and at one time there were 660 lodged at the public expense in the old Royal Palace at Winchester.

All this had a real, though perhaps at the time an unsuspected, influence upon the fate of the English Catholics. Then came the pressure put on Pitt by his Irish supporters, which in 1801 led to his proposal for a full measure of Catholic emancipation. This failed for a time through the King's refusal to countenance such a Relief Bill, and was the cause of Pitt's resignation of office. But it was obvious that it was now only a question of time, and Catholics took courage and heart. Their numbers increased. In 1816 Bishop Milner says that the Catholics in the Midland District numbered 15,000 as against 8,460 in 1780. Ten years later again it is put at 100,000 in round numbers. Even the Western District showed visible improvement. In 1815 the number of Catholics is given as 5,500, as against "the very few" of 1780. In London itself, Dr. Poynter states that in 1814 the

city itself was served by thirty-one priests, ministering in twelve chapels to an estimated Catholic population of 49,800. In the country parts of the same District the Catholics are put at 18,976. A map in the archives of Propaganda, dated 1826, gives 200,000 as the entire number of Catholics in this District. And after the Catholic Emancipation Bill of 1829 had been passed Bishop Griffiths estimates the Catholics of London at 146,000, the general population of the city being then about 1,500,000.

It is unnecessary to pursue the actual history further. The complete emancipation of Catholics in 1829 naturally led, in 1850, to the restoration of normal Church government, which had been lacking for three centuries. In Ireland the Church had never lost its Hierarchy, and even through the darkest days of persecution the continuity of the episcopate had been preserved. In England, alas! it had been allowed to lapse, and normal Episcopal government had remained in abeyance until Pius IX., on September 29, 1850, erected new Sees in place of the old ones which Pope St. Gregory had established for St. Augustine's mission nearly thirteen centuries before.

When we recall the state to which the long years of persecution had reduced the Catholic body at the dawn of the nineteenth century, we may well wonder at what has been accomplished since then. Who shall say how it has come about? Where out of our poverty, for example, have been found the sums of money for all our innumerable needs? Churches and colleges and schools, monastic buildings and convents, have all had to be built and supported; how, the Providence of God can alone explain. There have been failures and mistakes and losses, plenty of them, and inevitable during such a century of reconstruction as we have passed through. It is not for us to say how much we may have gained or how much we may have lost, provided that we have done and are doing, each in his own sphere, our duty to God and His Church. Work is the best test; and looking back there is sufficient evidence of this to make us thankful to God for His loving mercies.

From the first years of the nineteenth century, when the principle "suffer it to be" was applied to the English Catholic Church, there have been signs of the dawn of brighter, happier days for the old religion. Slight indeed were the signs at first, slight but significant, and precious memories to us now, of the working of the Spirit, of the

rising of the sap again in the old trunk, and of the bursting of bud and bloom in manifestation of that life which, during the long winter of persecution, had been but dormant. *Succisa virescit.* Cut down almost to the ground, the tree planted by Augustine has manifested again the divine life within it; it has put forth once more new branches and leaves, and gives promise of abundant fruit.

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